

DOWNCRAWL

2E

Prerelease Draft, Nov24

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This is a prerelease version of Downcrawl 2E without final art, layout, or text. Rules are still a work in progress and are subject to change before final release. Visit downcrawl.textories.com for info on the latest version.

Game design, writing, and layout by Aaron A. Reed (aaronareed.net). All art taken from the public domain. Typeset in Oculi and Modesto.

“Sliver of Fate” is inspired by ideas from Fate Condensed (found at <https://www.faterpg.com/>), a product of Evil Hat Productions, LLC, developed, authored, and edited by PK Sullivan, Lara Turner, Fred Hicks, Richard Bellingham, Robert Hanz, and Sophie Lagacé, and licensed for our use under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Unported license.

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FEEDBACK WELCOMED!

I'd love any feedback you have on this pre-release version of *Downcrawl 2E*, especially any produced by actual sessions playing it!

Keep in mind this is an advance release, so there's no interior art yet, and some tables and layout may be janky. But the rules should be pretty solid and the text is getting there, so any notes you have on either would be most welcomed.

If you just have a quick comment, noticed a typo, etc., please email your comments to aareed@gmail.com. I'd love to hear from you!

If you want to submit a full playtest report, I invite you to use the following form:

<https://forms.gle/6yh64Dc9NdQkVvq48>

Thanks so much!

—Aaron

Recent Rule Changes:

*Oct24: adjusted "Lost" so you always mark either success or failure

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WELCOME DOWN

THIS BOOK WILL HELP YOU run randomly generated, open-ended adventures in a weird and fantastical underworld, a place so far from the surface that the sun and sky are only legends, and so vast that no bounds can be placed on its dimensions or contents. We call this place **The Deep, Deep Down...** or just **the Down** for short. Here are some of its essential qualities:

THE DOWN IS VAST.

Three-dimensional, unmappable, and more or less infinite, the Down stretches its tunnels and tendrils through all the vast dark spaces of the earth. There is far more Down Here than there is Up There. Navigation is hard, even between familiar waypoints. Rather than a fixed set of races and enemies, there are a boundless number of cultures, powers, and threats: many beginnings but few endings.

THE DOWN IS CHALLENGING.

Food, water, even air may be rarities. Compasses don't work. Routes once wide and navigable might collapse or twist toward new, unstable destinations. There are few completely safe spaces. Journeys are always dangerous. Tread carefully.

THE DOWN IS WEIRD.

Think Wonderland. Think Moria. Think *Fallen London*. Think del Toro, Miéville, Gilliam, Peele: Spielberg but also Cronenberg. Think of the

consequences of no sun, no soil, no rain, no wind. Think of sentient purple moss reaching scheming tendrils miles through the dark, cheerful skeleton bards singing legends of stars on fragile lutes, antlered children racing through shell-paved streets and giggling. Think faceless cultists behind cold walls worshiping huge red worms, and bottomless chasms with rival universities clinging like limpets to their sides, telescopes pointed down into the endless deep.

THE DOWN IS ISOLATED.

Unlike more familiar underworlds, the Down doesn't connect to the surface through the lowest level of a dungeon or an everyday cave system—or if it does, finding such a path is a once-in-a-lifetime fluke. A world-spanning quest or freak accident has stranded your characters here: getting back, if even possible, will be a most epic adventure.

Welcome to torchlit dreams. Welcome to endless chasms. Welcome to echoing tunnels, underworld oceans, strange foes and stranger allies.

Welcome in, and welcome Down.

WHAT'S TO COME

Here's a quick guide to the rest of the book:

- ✦ **How To Crawl** ⁷ provides an introduction to core ideas and mechanics in *Downcrawl*. **Start here!**
- ✦ **Session Zero** ¹⁴ offers a script for your group to walk through to design your Down and characters together, setting yourselves up for an epic campaign.
- ✦ **Map & Volume** ²⁶ describes the structure of Volumes, key destinations within the Down, and how to map them.
- ✦ **Journeys** ³² explains how to structure perilous journeys through the Down.
- ✦ **Encounters** ⁴³ can be triggered during journeys.
- ✦ **Meeting Folk** ⁵² has info on how to generate the unique peoples of your Down.
- ✦ **Building Volumes** ⁵⁸ discusses creating memorable places.

- ⌘ **Exploring Volumes** ⁶⁶ has moves to help you explore Volumes, discover news and rumors, recover, and learn more about the world.
- ⌘ **Ventures** ⁷⁵ are a tool for managing long-term plans and challenges.
- ⌘ **Drugs & Fungus** ⁷⁹ describes an optional system for foraging strange mushrooms granting unusual abilities.
- ⌘ **Impromptu Play** ⁸⁹ has special moves and tips for groups playing without a GM, inventing their own spontaneous adventures together.
- ⌘ **Solo Play** ⁹⁵ has moves and tips for solo explorers.
- ⌘ **Sliver of Fate** ¹¹⁰ is a basic core system you can use to run Downcrawl adventures with.

HOW TO CRAWL

DOWNCRAWL IS A **TOOLKIT** to facilitate adventures in the Deep, Deep Down, whether alone or in a group. It's **designed to work alongside an existing core tabletop roleplaying system**, enhancing it with rules and procedures for underworld journeys and creating unique subterranean places and peoples.

RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES

- ❧ Character sheets, dice, and any other accoutrements necessary for your core system.
- ❧ A large sheet of paper or markable battle map in the center of the table, to be your Map
- ❧ Writing implements (pencils etc)
- ❧ Blank index cards, especially for **Impromptu Play** ⁸⁹ or **Solo Play** ⁹⁵.
- ❧ A handful of **6-sided dice** for rolling on tables.
- ❧ Optionally, the **Downcrawl Deck**, which provides a faster and streamlined approach to rolling on most tables. This can be purchased separately online, or there's a print and play version at downcrawl.textories.com.
- ❧ Optionally, player handouts with a printout of common moves (available at downcrawl.textories.com). [coming soon]

MOVES AND TABLES

Downcrawl's engine is a combination of **Moves**—instructions to follow when particular situations arise, such as planning a journey or arriving in a new place—and **Tables**, which help to randomly generate interesting prompts and ideas.

MOVES

Each Move gives guidance for handling a particular situation you might encounter during your exploration of the Down. Moves appear as boxed instructions in the text. See **Plan Your Journey** ³⁷ for an example Move.





TABLES

A Table is a collection of random ideas or prompts. Some moves or rules will instruct you to consult a particular table. This is called **Asking** the table, and will always appear in the format **ASK TERRAIN** ⁶¹ (The small number is this table's page number.) Often you'll combine info from two tables, such as **ASK QUALITY** ⁹³ + **IDEA** ⁹³.

There are two ways to **ASK** a table.

✦ **With the Downcrawl book**, turn to the given page(s) and **roll 2d6** (unless the table's header instructions say otherwise). Instead of adding the numbers together, read them in sequence from top to bottom (in the Down, we're always descending) to get a result like **3-5**. Read across in the given table for your result.

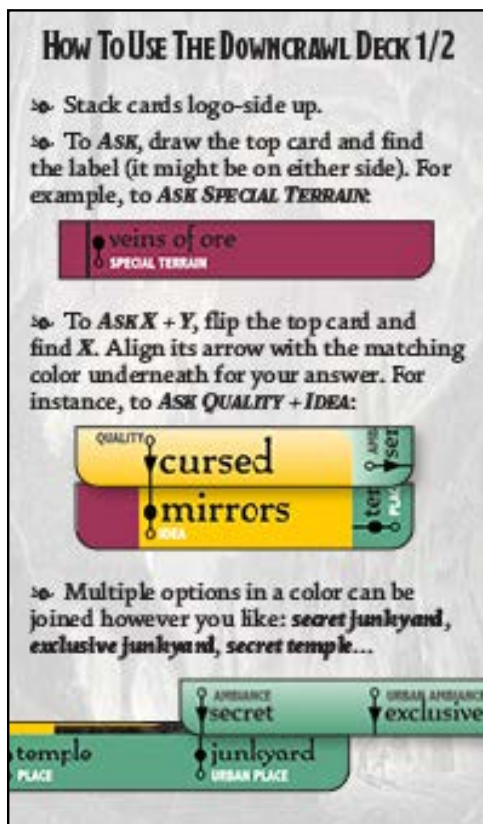
Occasionally you'll be asked to roll a **d3**. This is simply a **d6** halved:
 1-2 means 1,
 3-4 means 2,
 5-6 means 3.

QUALITY	
	2-3: cursed
	
IDEA	
	3-5: mirrors
	

- ✦ **With the Downcrawl Deck**, draw the top card, find the given label (which might be on either side), and read your result. When you're finished, return the card to the bottom of the deck.

The **Downcrawl Deck** really shines when you **ASK** two tables at once. Most combinatorial results are arranged along the edges of the cards and color-coded. You can simply draw the top card from the deck, flip it over, and align the colors to get a joint result.

A few less commonly used or more complex tables are not included in the **Downcrawl Deck**. These are indicated with the word “roll” after the book’s page number, such as **ASK FUNGAL NAME** 83 (ROLL).



Sample and instruction card from the **Downcrawl Deck**, available from xxx.xxx.xxx. A print and play version is available online at xxx.xxx.xxx.

VOLUMES & FOLK

Major waypoints in the Down are called **Volumes**. These represent the key landmarks and destinations in the region around your characters. Each campaign will have its own unique Volumes.

Folk are the unique peoples who live in your Down. Rather than a fixed set of fantasy races like elves, dwarves, or gnomes, there are an endless number of different Folk. Again, each group's Down will be populated by their own unique Folk.

CORE SYSTEM

You should be able to use any fantasy roleplaying game as your core game for a *Downcrawl* campaign, from traditional simulation-heavy games to more lightweight story-focused games. *Downcrawl* itself is neutral on things like combat or movement speeds.

If you don't have a system in mind, this book provides a bare-bones one called **Sliver of Fate** ¹¹⁰. Another recommended lightweight system is *The Black Hack* from Square Hex, which you can find for free online.

BONUSES AND PENALTIES. Some Moves or Tables may instruct you to add a Bonus or Penalty to a roll. This should be a small adjustment equivalent to a typical modifier in your core system. In a d20 system, a Bonus might mean +2; in FATE or a 2d6 system, it might mean +1; in a percentile system, it might mean +10%. Figure out something that feels right as a small but meaningful boost.

DAMAGE. If a Move or Table tells you to take Damage, this should correspond to an annoying but not deadly consequence in your core system: perhaps a **1d6** HP loss for a low-level character in a d20 game, or a negative Condition in a Fate-based game.

MODES OF PLAY

Downcrawl supports three distinct modes of play. The rules of the game are largely the same no matter which play mode you're using.

- ❧ **Guided play** is structured like a traditional roleplaying game, with a gamemaster (or Guide) who leads players through the world and has ultimate authority over questions about it. Downcrawl supports any amount of shared narrative control, from a Guide who creates Volumes and Folk in advance between sessions, to one who lets the players take full part in creating the world and merely helps facilitate and adjudicate questions. Guides should review the rules thoroughly and decide which Moves you want to give your players access to and which you'd like to reserve for yourself, depending on you and your group's preferred style.
- ❧ **Impromptu play** lets a group of players collaboratively create and explore the Down together, with no one single Guide and nothing created in advance. Instead, all players will help collaboratively invent and explore the world together at the table. See the chapter on **Impromptu Play** ⁸⁹ for more details on this play mode.
- ❧ **Solo play** lets a single player generate and explore a story-driven underworld on their own. See **Solo Play** ⁹⁵ for more details on this play mode.

YOUR GUIDE

Certain Moves will tell you to **ask your Guide** for an answer or response. The identity of your Guide varies depending on play mode.

- ❧ **In Guided play, the gamemaster is your guide.** They will supply answers either on the fly, or based on material they've prepared in advance.
- ❧ **In Impromptu play, ask anyone else at the table to be your guide** for the duration of this Move. The rules of the Move will specify what you and your Guide each need to do.
- ❧ **In Solo play, you can ASK tables to guide you**, including **THE ORACLE** ⁹⁸, a special table for Solo players. You'll also have some other special tools, such as the Story Deck, to help guide you.

THE FLOW OF PLAY

Downcrawl's Moves are organized into clusters which each effectively provide minigames supporting its core pillars of gameplay. **The two main pillars are Exploring Volumes and taking Journeys between them.**

- ❧ **Volume Moves** help you explore new Volumes, come up with interesting places, stories, people, and situations within them, and update your map with new info to help seed your next journey. Begin with **In a Volume** 67.
- ❧ **Journey Moves** take you through a dangerous journey from one Volume to another, from planning your journey through to arrival. Begin with **Plan Your Journey** 37, and then start each day of travel with **A Day on the Road** 38.

A **Travel Encounter** 44 can be triggered during a Journey, and creates an interesting problem, opportunity, or threat you might encounter deep in the subterranean wilds. These might become combats if that's what your group is into, but can also be more social or situational challenges.

The other move clusters are:

- ❧ **Fungal Foraging** presents an optional system for finding mushroom with interesting effects and distilling them into more potent but dangerous forms. Begin with **Fungal Foraging** 81.
- ❧ **Collaboration Moves** help your **Impromptu Play** 89 group improvise a story together without a set gamemaster. For **Solo Play** 95, **Solo Moves** help spark your creativity and track story threads when playing alone.

WHERE TO START

- ❧ **If you're a gamemaster**, read on through the following chapters for more details about how to run a campaign, or skip to **Meeting Folk** 52 and **Building Volumes** 58 to see the two key generators for people and places.
- ❧ **If you plan to play in a group with no gamemaster**, read through the first few chapters to learn how moves and rules work, and check out the chapter on **Impromptu Play** 89 for specifics about this

style of play. When you've got your group together, you can use the guidelines in **Session Zero** ¹⁴ to create a campaign world together and start playing.

- ❧ **If you plan to play solo**, follow the guidelines in the previous bullet and also check out the special chapter on **Solo Play** ⁹⁵. Turn to **Session Zero** ¹⁴ when you're ready to start building your world.

SESSION ZERO

Here are step-by-step instructions for starting a new *Downcrawl* campaign, designed for a group of players to do together. You'll seed your campaign world with interesting ideas, create your first few Volumes and Folk, and build characters well-suited to exploring your Deep, Deep Down.

The Session Zero procedure can be useful in any mode of play:

- ✦ **In Guided Play**, these steps are useful if you want to involve players in building the world, which can give them a lot more buy-in and investment in it. Alternatively, you can follow them yourself offline before your first session.
- ✦ **In Impromptu and Solo play**, these steps will help seed your world and introduce you to some of the key rules and ideas in *Downcrawl*.

These instructions are divided into three main steps: *Making Your Down*, *Creating Your Characters*, and *Beginning Your Story*. Each is likely to take 1-2 hours to work through, with the last getting more into “Session One” territory.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

One player should be familiar with the rulebook and able to facilitate leading the others through these steps.

Before gathering your play group, the facilitator should review the list of materials in **How To Crawl** 7 and make sure everything needed to play has been gathered, along with pencils, snacks, and anything else you need for some cozy worldbuilding.

MAKING YOUR DOWN

Introduce the world of *Downcrawl*. If you like, pass the book around and read aloud from the opening pages of **Welcome Down** 4.

DISCUSS TONE AND SAFETY

Take a minute to discuss what kind of mood you want for your campaign, and share any common points of reference about underworld settings (from other games, books, movies, ghost stories, or anywhere else). Is your campaign going to be more like dark fantasy *Labyrinth*, creepy horror *The Descent*, or swashbuckling adventure *Journey to the Center of the Earth*? What emotions or tropes are you hoping to invoke: gritty survival, a sense of wonder, embracing the weird?

You'll have great freedom to invent your own take on the Deep, Deep Down, but a few ground rules should be followed to make the system work:

- ✦ **No Fast or Easy Travel.** Long-range teleportation does not work in the Down, nor do perfect navigation abilities. Dangerous journeys and the potential to get lost on them is a core part of the experience!
- ✦ **The Down Extends Forever** (as far as you know). The Surface is only a legend; if you came from there, you don't know how to get back. There is always more Down in every direction.

THE “NO THANK YOU” LIST

Get a blank index card and start a list of any topics that anyone doesn't want to see in this campaign. These can be tropes you're sick of, topics that squick you out, or subject matter you don't want to be part of this particular story. If any clarification is needed, briefly discuss what the boundaries are that will keep everyone comfortable. Work together to keep those elements out of your narrative.

- ✦ You can always add more elements to the No Thank You list at any time during play.
- ✦ Review the No Thank You list before you start each new game session, to make sure everyone remembers the kind of story you've all agreed to tell.

Or, Play Downcrawl Worlds. As an alternative to the *Making Your Down* part of Session Zero if you have the Downcrawl Deck, you can instead play *Downcrawl Worlds*, a standalone worldbuilding game designed to be a fun and collaborative way to invent some Volumes and Folk together. It's easy to turn the aftermath of a *Downcrawl Worlds* game into the materials you need to run a full campaign. The rules are available at xxx.xxx.xxx.

BRAINSTORM IDEAS

This section works differently depending on whether you are playing with the *Downcrawl Deck*: skip to the appropriate section.

» WITH THE DOWNCRAWL DECK

Deal five cards to each player. Hold them face down (the side with the dice icons) and find the yellow **QUALITY** words.

Each player should **pick one QUALITY and put it in the center of the table**, holding on to their other cards for now.

/// Note: with four or fewer players, continue taking turns playing Qualities until there are five in the center. Solo players should draw eight cards and play five Qualities.

Flip your remaining cards over to the other side (where the Downcrawl logo is visible). Now each player **picks a yellow IDEA to put in the center**. You don't need to worry about keeping Qualities and Ideas separate. Don't try yet to match it with a specific other card.

/// With four or fewer players, continue to five Ideas as above. Solo players should flip their cards over, draw four more, and play five Ideas.

As a group, **consider all the yellow words on the table**. If anyone doesn't like one or doesn't want it to be part of this campaign, they can swap that card for another in their hand.

» WITH THE DOWNCRAWL BOOK ONLY

Give a blank index card to each player and tear it in half across the shorter side. (Solo players, take five cards.)

Find the **QUALITY** 93 table on the listed page of the book. Now pass the book around the table and let each player **choose (not roll) a QUALITY** 93 and **an IDEA** 93 that inspires them. Don't take forever: pick the first of each that catches your eye. Write each word on a card half, using big, bold letters so they can be read from across the table. Put all card halves face-up in the center of the table.

/// Note: with four or fewer players, continue passing the book around until you have five **Quality** words and five **Idea** words.

As a group, **consider all the words on the table**. If anyone doesn't like one or doesn't want it to be part of this campaign, they can flip the card over and write a different **QUALITY** or **IDEA** instead.

Now (regardless of which method you used) collaboratively **join cards into groups of two** to represent single concepts like *wind-up giants* or *rainbow skeletons*. A **Quality** + an **Idea** will be most likely to fit, but you can combine any two words. Discuss briefly what you mean by the combo if it's not obvious, but don't fully flesh these ideas out just yet.

Once you're finished, you should end up with at least five two-word **Ideas**.

STEALING AN IDEA

As you continue, you'll have frequent opportunities to **Steal an Idea** from the cards in the center. When you do this, take the associated cards and explain how you are making use of this idea. You are free to expand or alter it, adding your own unique twist.

Things you might use a stolen idea for:

- ◆ *Instead of rolling on a table*
- ◆ *As justification for something you rolled or invented*
- ◆ *As a concept for a character or NPC*
- ◆ *As a Detail for a Volume or Folk*
- ◆ *For any other kind of inspiration*

Once you've stolen the idea, you'll likely be writing it down somewhere else, so you don't need to keep the original prompt cards around. If using index cards, you can toss them out; with the *Downcrawl Deck*, return the cards to the bottom of the deck.

CREATE YOUR FIRST VOLUME

Begin by reading aloud **Moves and Tables 8** in the previous chapter, to learn how to **Ask** using either dice and tables or the *Downcrawl Deck*. Make sure all players are clear on how to do this.

You'll start to build your Deep, Deep Down by creating some **Volumes**. These are regions within your underworld defined by a particular power or theme: kingdoms, wastelands, cities, dungeons. Pick a player to lead the creation of your first Volume and follow these steps:

- ✦ **Determine the Volume's first two Details: ASK THEME** ⁶², and **ASK ASPECT** ⁶¹ + **TERRAIN** ⁶¹. You can roll or draw these both yourself, or ask other players to do so for you. Note that some Themes ask for a second roll or draw to complete the prompt.

If you're using the Downcrawl Deck, whenever you ASK two tables at once (as with ASPECT + TERRAIN), flip over the top card and look for the first category. You'll be able to match the color and arrow symbol with the second category on the next card down.

For Themes, note that each card has two possible options to choose between.

- ✦ **Marry these two Details** and tell us your concept for this unique new place. Is it a city, a wilderness, a badlands, a dungeon? We don't need to completely flesh it out, but establish a core concept for this Volume before moving on.
- ✦ **Name this Volume**, asking for help from the table if necessary. It's fine to go with something dumb and obvious.
- ✦ **Create a Map Deck card** for this Volume. You can use a blank index card oriented vertically, or custom templates available at xxx.com. The important thing to record is the Volume's Name, its first two Details, and leave room for four more. (You can ignore the Remoteness for now, we'll explain that later.)

You're only sketching out the barest glimpses of these places for now: resist the urge to develop them more fully, which will happen in play. A Volume is fully defined once you've learned six Details about it, usually two of each type: Terrain, Theme, and Resource.

Map Deck cards can be taken up by any player at any time as a record of what you know about each Volume. Some moves will instruct you to shuffle and draw from the Map Deck.

VOLUME NAME			
Deepness Bastion			
RE MOTENESS			
<input type="checkbox"/> KNOWN 4 2 ...	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SHELTERED 2 3 ...	<input type="checkbox"/> SECRET 0 4 ...	
DETAILS			
monumental project			THEME
			THEME
deep shaft			TERRAIN
lava vents			TERRAIN
			RESOURCE ABUNDANT OR SCARCE
			RESOURCE ABUNDANT OR SCARCE

A FEW MORE VOLUMES

Ask the player on your left to lead creation of the next Volume. **Continue creating new Volumes until you have three.** A few notes as you create additional Volumes:

- ✦ Whenever you're told to **ASK ASPECT + TERRAIN**, you can always choose to **ASK SPECIAL TERRAIN** instead.
- ✦ Remember, anyone can Steal an Idea instead of **Asking** at any prompt.

New Volumes In Play. You just walked through a slightly streamlined version of the move **Spark a Volume** ⁶⁰, which is how you'll discover new Volumes in play. When instructed by a move, or any time the story suggests you've heard about a whole new place, play this move.

THE MAP

You'll also track Volumes on your **Map**, ideally a large sheet of paper or a markable battle mat in the center of your place space, visible to all players. Volumes and the connections between them, called **Routes**, will impact your journeys through the Deep, Deep Down. **Transfer each Volume you created to your Map** now, by writing its name somewhere on the map.

The Map is For You. Players are free to add annotations, sketches, and notes to the map at any time.

Keep in mind that the space between Volumes is relatively arbitrary, since it's a flat abstraction of a massive three-dimensional labyrinth. Adjacency is more represented by the Routes connecting Volumes... but these may change during play as new paths open up and old tunnels collapse, so draw them in pencil (or erasable marker).

Before you can connect up your Volumes with Routes, you'll need to give each a **Remoteness**, one of three labels that affects how difficult a Volume is to reach and how many Routes may connect to it. The Remotenesses are **Known**, **Sheltered**, and **Secret**.

REMOTENESS	MAX ROUTES	JOURNEY STEPS	EXAMPLES
KNOWN	4	2	<i>big city, famous landmark, crossroads</i>
SHELTERED	2	3	<i>mysterious, special interest, remote</i>

SECRET	1	4	legendary, hidden, isolated
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Once you’ve decided on a Remoteness for each of your Volumes, **add two Routes** to the map, lines connecting one Volume to another. It’s fine to leave some Volumes unconnected for now.

You can use a special notation system on the Map to keep track of how Remoteness affects your ability to modify it and to navigate. See **Map Symbols** 27 for details.

CREATE SOME FOLK

Taking turns again, create a few new Folk (the peoples who live in your Deep, Deep Down), with one player guiding the discussion for each. Here’s how to create a Folk:

- **Determine the Folk’s first three Details: ASK APPEARANCE** 54, **FOLK CONCEPT** 55, and **REPUTATION** 56, taking turns so one player asks for each Detail.

Interpreting Italic Text. Appearance and Folk Concept results might have italicized text suggesting possible options: choose one, or invent your own. Folk Concepts might also ask for a second draw or roll to complete the prompt.

- **Marry these Details** and tell us your concept for this Folk.
- **Give this Folk a name.** Again, it’s fine to go with something obvious. You might also try mashing together some syllables from the prompts you selected.
- **Create a Folk Deck card** for this people. The Folk Deck is the other kind of custom deck you’ll create for your Downcrawl game. As with Map Deck cards, leave room for six Details.

A fully defined Folk consists of six Details, two each of Appearance, Concept, and Reputation.

FOLK NAME & SUMMARY	
The Chitter insectoid construct scavengers	
DETAILS	
hybrids or mutants (made from scavenged parts)	APPEARANCE
Legs (many)	APPEARANCE
Exiled from homes	CONCEPT
	CONCEPT
Mysterious	REPUTATION
	REPUTATION

Keep creating Folk until you have at least three. Remember, you can always Steal an Idea in place of **Asking**.

New Folk In Play. In regular play, you will usually invent new folk during **Greetings, Stranger** ⁹⁴. Each time you have a new conversation or interaction with a particular Folk, you can **ASK** for one additional Detail about them.

CREATING YOUR CHARACTERS

CORE SYSTEM

You'll need a Core System to play *Downcrawl* with: a roleplaying engine that these underworld exploration mechanics rest on top of. Refer to **Core System** ¹⁰ for more details or recommendations, or see **Sliver of Fate** ¹¹⁰ for a simple core system included with this book.

You'll want to discuss with your group and decide how the following *Downcrawl* terms referenced in these rules translate to your Core System:

- ❧ **Bonuses and Penalties:** what modifier in your system corresponds to a small boost or detriment?
- ❧ **Damage:** what is appropriate as a negative outcome for characters: perhaps a loss of hit points? If so, roughly how much?

CHARACTER CONCEPTS

You can start a *Downcrawl* campaign with brand new characters, or bring existing characters into an underworld setting.

If you're starting with fresh characters, pause a moment to talk about what kind of heroes you want to play. Will you be surface folk new to the Down, out of your element; or lifelong natives of this infinite underground? Would you have more fun playing born explorers or reluctant exiles, naive nubbins or experienced thrill-seekers, classic adventurer archetypes or truly weird original creations? Or a motley crew of each?

Get a basic idea about your group as a whole and each character in general terms ("naive wizard," "mystical frog lady") before continuing. Steal an Idea from your list if any seem intriguing to base a character around.

If you're bringing surface characters into the Down, and need an excuse for how they got there, here are some ideas:

- ◆ Scientific spelunking expedition got seriously lost
- ◆ Upset the wrong wizard
- ◆ Fell into bottomless chasm on lowest dungeon level
- ◆ Enslaved by evil Folk
- ◆ Ship sucked into mile-wide whirlpool
- ◆ Teleportation stone struck by lightning just as you touched it
- ◆ Gnomes **could** build a lava submarine; didn't stop to think if they **should**
- ◆ Earthquake drops favorite tavern into giant crack, spills your ale
- ◆ Oops: sailed off edge of world
- ◆ You just wake up down there, a strange glowing symbol on each wrist

YOUR DRIVE

Decide what drives your characters (individually or together) to explore. Why can't you settle down like normal folk? What drives you forward to ever-deeper, ever-stranger places?

- ✦ **Find A Way Home.** Perhaps back to the Surface, if you came from there; perhaps to an impossibly distant homeland. What do you remember of your homeland and most wish to see again? What drives you to keep searching, even though the chance of return seems slight?
- ✦ **Hunter (or Hunted).** You're seeking a legendary treasure or quarry, or being hunted yourself by a beast, a relentless agent of vengeance, or the law. If you are the hunter, who or what is your quarry, and why are you so driven to find it? If you are the hunted, who is pursuing you, and why are they so intent on you in particular?
- ✦ **A Wandering Heart.** The Down is vast and full of wonders. Each new vista, folk, or creature is a treasure, each journey a new adventure. Perhaps you're an itinerant merchant or entertainer, or researching a tedious monography, or maybe you just deliver the mail. Maybe you just wander for the sheer joy of wandering. What is one terrain or creature you've always longed to see? What is a peace or joy common in others you've never been able to find in yourself?
- ✦ **To Save the World.** A terrible fate is coming that only you see. A sleeping evil grown restless, a countdown to apocalypse, or maybe just a social malaise you wish to stand against. Your quest is quixotic, perhaps even impossible, but nothing could possibly matter more. Why are you the only one who sees that the Down needs saving? What is the next step you must take toward success?

- ✧ **The Hope of Reunion.** It's been so long since you've seen them, you struggle to remember their face: a lover, a daughter, a dear comrade from long ago. The Down might stretch on forever, but some part of it may still hold the one you seek: you will not rest until you've found either the person, or their grave. *Who do you seek and why were you parted? Why have you given up everything for the slim hope of finding them again?*
- ✧ **To Learn the Truth.** A great mystery drives you: finding a legendary Volume or long-lost Folk, discovering the fate of a glorious treasure, uncovering an ancient secret that could hold the answer to everything. You will leave no stone unturned until you have your answer. *What truth do you seek and why is it so hard to find? What was the last clue you found, no matter how obscure?*

Finally, decide as a group the answer to these questions:

- ✧ Which Volume are we starting in?
- ✧ What's something we each love or hate about this place?
- ✧ Why can't we stay here?

ROLL 'EM UP

Create your characters according to the rules of your core system.

***No Perfect Navigation.** Recall that Downcrawl doesn't play well with any spells or abilities in your core system that make navigation trivial, remove the need for rest, or allow long-range teleportation. If anyone's thinking of playing a character whose race, class, etc. might provide them with such an ability, discuss a fair way to swap it out for something else.*

BEGINNING YOUR STORY

When you're ready to begin your adventure:

- ✧ **Gain 2 Tack.** This is a communal resource shared by the whole party, representing your knowledge of safe paths and dangerous obstacles. **Tack** ³⁰ is spent during journeys to ensure successful arrival. If you run out, you'll get lost.
- ✧ **Fully define your starting Volume** by **ASKING** for its remaining core Details. A fully defined Volume has two each of:

- ◆ **THEME** ⁶² (you have one of these already)
- ◆ **ASPECT + TERRAIN** ⁶¹ (you have one of these already)
- ◆ **RESOURCE** ⁶³ . For a Resource Detail, also say whether it's *Abundant* or *Scarce* here.

Note that when defining any Detail, it's always okay to rewrite it to better capture your idea. If you're defining a place with a "Noxious Shore" and roll "Profoundly Weird," you might decide the strange air here causes hallucinations: instead of "Profoundly Weird," you could add "Weird Hallucinations" as the second Detail.

If you're playing Solo, skip forward at this point to read the chapter on **Solo Play** ⁹⁵, then return here once you're done.

THE CURTAIN RISES

You'll begin with your characters gathered together, somewhere in your agreed-upon starting Volume. To establish the scene, you're going to play your first move: **Set the Scene** ⁹¹ . Turn to the page indicated and follow the given instructions, then return here once you're finished. Note that this is a great opportunity to steal any final, unclaimed Ideas.

What Move To Play Next? Knowing what Move to play next is key to keeping momentum going in a Downcrawl game. If you're ever unsure, see **Move Pointers** ¹¹⁶ .

A SPOT OF TROUBLE

Based on how you answered the questions defined earlier, in particular *Why can't we stay here?*, you may have an initial challenge or obstacle in your way. To represent this, let's create your first Venture, a system for tracking long-term challenges. Turn to the **Ventures** ⁷⁵ chapter and follow the instructions for making a new Venture.

Talk in character about the problem and how each of you feels you might go about solving it. Keep in mind your Drives: are you eager to pursue them right now? Trying to forget them? Has something more pressing come up?

Once you're ready to take action towards resolving this Venture, decide what the first step or roll is going to be. Improvise and roleplay until you get to the point where you're ready to make that roll. Once you do so,

mark the first box of the Venture a success or failure, as described in the Venture rules. Then start thinking about what the next step might be.

***In Solo or Impromptu play**, you might find yourself at a loss for an answer or idea. You can play **Find Inspiration** ⁹², or **ASK THE ORACLE** ⁹⁸, to help generate a random development or nudge you towards an answer.*

Alongside the immediate obstacle presented by your Venture, you may also be keen to start planning a journey away from this place. Before doing so, you might consider playing the move **Visit The Map Room** ⁶⁹. This is a way to extend your Map and learn more about the places on it, which is useful before undertaking a journey.

You can also take a number of other actions while in a Volume. The aptly-named move **In a Volume** ⁶⁷ details what these are. And if you ever hear a rumor of a new place you don't know of yet or it makes narrative sense to create one, play **Spark a Volume** ⁶⁰.

Explore these moves for a while and get some practice invoking moves. Try to make progress on your Venture, resolving it if you can. Once you're ready to leave this place, turn to **Plan Your Journey** ³⁷ to learn how to travel through the Down.

***Next Steps.** That's it for the Session Zero quickstart! Once you've completed your first Journey, you'll be Downcrawl pros. You can read on from here for more details about each major piece of the game, starting with the Map, then continuing on to Journeys, Encounters, Folk, Volumes, Ventures, and Fungus.*

MAP & VOLUME

IN A TRADITIONAL HEXCRAWL, the GM makes a map of hexes in advance for the players to explore. Each hex represents an area of fixed size, and if you travel north from one, you can generally return by heading south.

Maps in the Deep, Deep Down are more ephemeral, unstable, and three-dimensional. Instead of a hex, each key destination here is called a **Volume**, with no fixed sizes or distances between them. A Volume might be a single city, a vast labyrinth with millions of passages, or the lair of a mighty beast and the fearful villages around it. It's a region dominated by a specific influence, be it cultural, geographic, or biological. Surrounding each Volume is trackless subterranean wilderness: tunnels, caves, shifting volcanic channels, terrain unpredictable, unmappable, and wild.

Volumes are linked not by cardinal directions but by ephemeral **Routes**: likely temporary, definitely circuitous. New Routes might be discovered and old ones might vanish as the players gather rumors and update the map. The players will draw lines between Volumes on their map to indicate Routes currently known.

/// You can journey to a Volume even if no known Routes lead there, either direct or indirect: it's just much more difficult. See **Plan Your Journey** ³⁷.

REMOTENESS

Each Volume has a **Remoteness** which affects the maximum number of Routes that may connect to it, and how difficult it is to journey there. A Volume can be *Known*, *Sheltered*, or *Secret*.

REMOTENESS	MAX ROUTES	JOURNEY STEPS	EXAMPLES
KNOWN	4	2	big city, famous landmark, crossroads
SHELTERED	2	3	mysterious, special interest, remote
SECRET	1	4	legendary, hidden, isolated

Max Routes is a Guideline. Feel free to overrule it if it makes a better story. If it would really make sense for that misty tunnel under the necromancer's tomb to lead to the Black Chasm, even if its connections are maxed out, knock yourself out.

There's also an optional rule, Lost Volumes 65, for places you've heard of but have no way at present to reach.

THE MAP

The centerpiece of your play space should be a large public map of all discovered Volumes and known Routes between them. Players should feel free to add annotations, sketches, and notes.

✍ Write everything on your map in pencil. It's always subject to change.

The positioning of Volumes on the map is arbitrary, since it's a flat abstraction of a massive three-dimensional labyrinth: just because two volumes are drawn near to each other doesn't mean they're actually physically close, nor that there's easy travel between them. Routes provide a rough metric for distance, but in truth there are countless possible ways to travel between any two Volumes.

MAP SYMBOLS

It's helpful to keep some info about each Volume directly on the map, so you can see at a glance how easy a place is to connect or journey to. Here's one system for doing so.

✍ **Track the maximum Routes** this Volume may connect to (a function of its Remoteness) by writing the number to the **left** of the name and underlining it. The underline mirrors a route line on the map.

✍ **Track the number of journey steps** to reach this Volume (also a function of Remoteness) by



writing it to the **right** of the name with a dotted line. The dots represent a journey trail.

✦ **Track aids to journeying there:** When you’ve learned four Details about a Volume, add a plus under its name. When you’ve visited a Volume, circle the plus. These two indicators help you see places it’s easier to **Plan Your Journey** ³⁷ to.

VOLUME DETAILS

As you learn about new Volumes, you will track key info learned as **Details**. A Volume can have three types of Details: **Theme**, **Terrain**, and **Resource**. A Volume is considered defined once it has two Details of each type. See **Building Volumes** ⁵⁸ for more on Volume Details.

A fully defined Volume consists of a **Name**, a **Remoteness**, and six core **Details**. You can and will, of course, continue to learn more about a place beyond the six core Details, but those are what mechanically defines it. Local Details are a way to capture specific places, people, or threads constrained to one particular Volume (see **Volume Structure** ⁵⁸).

Resources are either **Abundant** or **Scarce**. It’s okay to have any combination of Abundances and Scarcities as Volume Details: two Abundant Resources, two Scarce ones, or a mixture of each. Volumes might gain additional Resource Details when fictionally appropriate.

You could even have both an Abundance and Scarcity of the same Resource in a Volume, with a little narrative finesse! Maybe something is abundant for the rich, but scarce for the poor; or abundant in one variety but scarce in another.

THE MAP DECK

The Map Deck is a stack of index cards, one for each Volume. You record the Volume’s name, Remoteness, and key Details on the front side, and Local Details on the back.

VOLUME NAME			
Deepness Bastion			
REMOTENESS			
<input type="checkbox"/> KNOWN 4 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SHELTERED 2 3	<input type="checkbox"/> SECRET 0 4	
DETAILS			
monumental project			THEME
			THEME
deep shaft			TERRAIN
lava vents			TERRAIN
			RESOURCE ABUNDANT OR SCARCE
			RESOURCE ABUNDANT OR SCARCE

The Map Deck is an open deck: anyone can feel free to consult it at any time, and everyone is encouraged to do so to keep track of what's known about each Volume.

Drawing From a (Two-Sided) Map Deck. Some Moves will ask you to draw a card from the Map Deck. If you've been tracking Local Details on the back of the cards, this might seem odd since you'll be able to infer what the next card is in advance of drawing. Map Deck drawing is never strategic, so it shouldn't matter, but if it bothers you, grab the deck and hold it below the table or out of eyeline, shuffling the cards around and then grabbing one sight unseen.

TACK

Every successful journey through the Down requires first earning hard-won knowledge about obscure paths, dangers best avoided, temporary detours and permanent changes; and then using that knowledge to navigate successfully. Navigational intel is represent as an abstract numeric resource called **Tack**, shared by the party.

You can think of Tack as a distillation of all the wits, wisdom, and records your adventurers have scraped together about reaching destinations in the endless maze of the Deep, Deep Down; some messy combination of map scraps, scribbled notes, half-remembered directions, and gut feelings; knowledge begged, borrowed, or stolen about possible courses and hidden pathways.

If you drop to 0 Tack while on a journey, you become Lost, and completing the trip becomes much more dangerous and difficult.

The party can spend Tack to:

- ◆ increase the odds of a successful **Journey On** ³⁹ or **Journey's End** ⁴¹.
- ◆ learn about specific destinations or targets when you **Visit The Map Room** ⁶⁹ or play **Supply And Demand** ⁷⁰.

You might involuntarily lose Tack because of:

- ◆ a bad roll during **Journey On** ³⁹.
- ◆ a Threat during a **Travel Encounter** ⁴⁴.
- ◆ gambling for map scraps during **Recovery** ⁶⁸.
- ◆ story reasons (a guide betrays you, a vital navigation aid is lost, etc)

You can regain Tack when you:

- ◆ accept a failure while you **Journey On** ³⁹.
- ◆ spend time to Scout while you **Encamp** ⁴².
- ◆ find a way to get un-Lost ⁴⁰ or are especially successful reaching your **Journey's End** ⁴¹.
- ◆ get the right Opportunity during a **Travel Encounter** ⁴⁴.
- ◆ choose certain options in **Visit The Map Room** ⁶⁹.
- ◆ gamble for map scraps during **Recovery** ⁶⁸.
- ◆ narratively earn it (a horde of maps is discovered, a geographic secret learned)

REGIONS (OPTIONAL RULE)

If your map's getting cluttered, or you'd like to move a long-running campaign forward into a new act, you can introduce **Regions**, a way of organizing Volumes.

- Give each Region its own Map and Map Deck.
 - Routes may only connect Volumes within the same region.
 - Border Volumes (which are always Sheltered) can appear on two maps, allowing access to one Volume in each Region.
- /// Consider making some of a border Volume's Details specific to its unique position: it might have Themes like Border Town or Gateway, or Terrains like Long Tunnel or Immense Chasm.

JOURNEYS

WHEN THE PARTY TRAVELS from one Volume to another, they leave one pocket of safety and stability and move into the uncharted depths of the Deep, Deep Down. While Volumes are often centered around sources of food, light, warmth, or protection, these resources may be scarce in the places between.

Several general rules apply during journeys:

- ✦ **Journey Moves.** Journeys are simulated through a series of moves presented in this chapter, beginning with **Plan Your Journey** ³⁷.
- ✦ **Abstracted Movement.** Progress is made by taking a series of **journey steps**, rather than tracking specific distances and directions. This number is determined when you Plan Your Journey.

Journeys are Ventures. Though you don't need to read ahead, the way journey progress is tracked is a reusable system called **Ventures** ⁷⁵ which is helpful for tracking other kinds of long-term projects too.

- ✦ **No True Rest.** Characters may not take a long rest, full recovery, or otherwise regain their full strength while traveling between Volumes. These interstitial spaces are profoundly unsafe and magically unstable: equilibrium is not easily restored, and you'll need to marshal your resources carefully. (Once you reach the safety of a new Volume, you may play **Recovery** ⁶⁸.)
- ✦ **No Perfect Navigation.** Any skills, spells, or abilities from your core system that say you “never get lost” or “always find the right

path” won’t work as advertised in the Down. You should work with your guide to find alternatives.

DANGERS

As you travel the Down, you will be seen. A **Danger** is a looming threat that is stalking you, searching for you, or growing nearer with each step. Track Dangers on a list shared by the whole party, either on an index card or separate sheet of paper (or directly on your Map).

The list of Dangers begins empty and can have up to three items on it.

Certain moves will ask you to **add the current number of Dangers** to influence an outcome. Other moves might direct you to Remove or **Add a Danger** ³³.

Whenever you **ASK THREAT** ⁴⁷ (ROLL), you may instead **choose for a Danger to fully reveal itself** and become the current Threat. If you conclusively deal with this danger in the aftermath, you can **Remove a Danger** ³⁴.

ADD A DANGER

When a move tells you to Add a Danger, ASK PORTENT ³⁵ for an ominous sign or hint of impending trouble. Choose blind or roll **d3** for one of the corresponding Index numbers; record it along with the Portent on the list of Dangers.

If there are already three Dangers, choose one instead and explain how the danger seems to be getting stronger, closer, or more obvious. Alternatively, reveal a new **PORTENT** that has the same Index number.

If this Danger later reveals itself, ASK THREAT ⁴⁷ with the Danger’s index number.

Return to: Journey On³⁹; Lost⁴⁰; Encamp⁴²

REMOVE A DANGER

When a move tells you to Remove a Danger, cross one off the list and explain how this threat has lessened for now, perhaps because you've left a dangerous area or acted cleverly to give a foe the slip.

Return to: **Encamp**⁴²; **Journey's End**⁴¹; **Recovery**⁶⁸

*Dangers mostly cause trouble during Journeys. In Volumes, you can play moves like **Recovery**⁶⁸ to escape them, or perhaps dealing with them might inspire Ventures or other challenges*

As a result of a journey mishap, the party must Add a Danger. Em rolls 4-6 on Portents for a result of *tiny fleeing insects*, choosing at random the index option 3-3. She explains how the party is seeing more and more floods of insects of all kinds rapidly moving away from where they're headed, and writes "fleeing insects - 3-3" on the list of Dangers.

Later, a Travel Encounter results in a Threat. Rather than rolling for a Threat, the party decides it's time to confront the fleeing insects Danger. Consulting Threat with the index of 3-3 reveals a result of *Catastrophe (earthquake, avalanche, volcano, sinkhole, ceiling collapse)*. The group decides the threat that arrives is a volcanic explosion that spews forth hot lava into the cavern. "The beetles knew! They knew!! We should have listened to the beetles!!" cries the bard as her mandolin catches fire...

SOME NOTES ON JOURNEYS

- ✧ **How Much Tack?** You are generally advised to begin a journey with more Tack than journey steps. See **In a Volume**⁶⁷ for various ways to acquire Tack.
- ✧ **How Long?** Journey steps correspond to days of travel. Remember, though, that you cannot easily rest or recover resources until a journey is over.
- ✧ **Too Tough?** If a journey seems beyond your means, one strategy is to do **Visit The Map Room**⁶⁹ where you can pay Tack to do more research on your destination. If not having enough Tack is

PORTENT

Describe the portent, then pick an Index or roll d3; record it along with the Portent. When a Danger is revealed, **ASK THREAT** ⁴⁷ with the Index.

	1	2	3
1-1 passageway choked by webs	3-4	1-1	4-1
1-2 a spectral, unnatural cold	1-5	3-5	1-2
1-3 distant rumblings	3-3	1-4	3-6
1-4 disturbed, looted tombs	2-5	1-2	2-3
1-5 terrible nightmares, or waking hallucinations	1-5	1-3	3-5
1-6 regurgitated skeleton	1-6	3-4	1-4
2-1 freshly knifed corpses	2-3	2-1	2-2
2-2 sketch of a party member	2-4	2-2	2-1
2-3 route intentionally diverted	3-1	2-3	2-2
2-4 increasing amount of evil runes or warning glyphs	1-2	3-2	2-5
2-5 mute shell-shocked survivors, or a severed limb	5-3	2-6	3-4
2-6 bloody chains, or corpse in a cage	2-6	1-2	2-3
3-1 passage increasingly wet and dripping	1-3	3-6	3-1
3-2 crushed body	3-6	3-2	1-4
3-3 sign or note warning you to turn back	3-1	1-1	3-4
3-4 passage more and more overgrown	3-4	2-4	1-6
3-5 intense headaches	6-6	1-5	3-5
3-6 hastily abandoned camp	2-6	2-1	5-3
4-1 more and more claustrophobic passages	3-1	3-6	1-1
4-2 tracks of massive animal	1-4	2-5	3-4
4-3 ominous silence	2-2	1-2	3-5
4-4 terrible stench	3-5	1-4	1-6
4-5 threatening note	2-3	2-1	2-2
4-6 increasing number of fleeing tiny insects	5-3	1-1	3-3
5-1 eyes watching you in the dark	1-2	2-1	2-2
5-2 scorch marks on walls	3-2	1-3	5-3
5-3 raving lunatic warning about end times	3-3	5-3	1-3
5-4 trail of blood that suddenly stops	1-6	2-6	1-1
5-5 pathway dangerously eroded	3-6	3-1	3-3
5-6 too-cheerful traveler: "you'll meet a friend soon"	2-4	1-3	6-6
6-1 water stops showing your reflections	6-6	2-5	1-2
6-2 small items missing from camp each morning	1-6	2-3	1-2
6-3 empty crushed potion vials with foul odor	1-5	2-4	2-5
6-4 recurring evil-looking symbol carved into rock	2-6	1-3	3-2
6-5 moss and fungus all dead, only bare rock	3-5	3-6	3-4
6-6 echoing chitters or whispers	2-3	1-1	1-2

Return to Travel Encounter ⁴⁴; Add a Danger ³³

the problem, you might try **Supply And Demand** ⁷⁰ to discover a place likely to have a cache of Tack (with, say, an Abundance of Maps). You might also hunt around in your current Volume for a guide, or other sources of more Details about your destination Volume; or first journey to an adjacent or connected Volume.

- ⌘ **NO PIT STOPS.** The shortest path via Routes serves only as a surrogate for approximate distance, and does not imply you'll be able to pass through the Volumes along the way for a pit stop: the quickest journey between two Volumes in three-dimensional space will rarely pass through any known territory. If you want to hit an interstitial Volume on the way, you'll need to split your trip into two smaller journeys.

PLAN YOUR JOURNEY

When you prepare for a journey to another Volume, determine the number of journey steps by beginning with the destination's Remoteness:

☞ 2 if Known

☞ 3 if Sheltered

☞ 4 if Secret, and you must be in an adjacent Volume

If the destination is connected to your current Volume via a series of Routes, add the length of the shortest path (max 4).

If you can't reach it from here via any Route, add 4.

If you know less than four Details about it, add 1.

If anyone you travel with has been there before, subtract 1.

Now take a tall index card and write a name for the journey along the top (such as "Journey from Bleakport to Beasthaven.") Add empty boxes down the left side of the card, one per line, equal to the number of journey steps. As your journey progresses, in each box you will either **log success** ✓ by checking the box, or **log failure** ✕ by Xing it out.

Put a second line around the final box: it will determine the final success or failure of your journey.

Begin your journey with **A Day on the Road** ³⁸.

Journeys are Ventures ⁷⁵, with the same index card and empty boxes technique useful for tracking other kinds of long-term goals.

Journey:
Bleakport to Beasthaven

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	stony mines
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	haunted river
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	

A DAY ON THE ROAD

When each day of a journey begins, first determine the terrain you pass through today by picking the first option that matches:

- ☛ If this is the first day of the journey, pick a Terrain Detail from your starting Volume.
- ☛ If you Encamped or did not log success yesterday, you're still in the same terrain.
- ☛ If 2+ journey steps remain, **ASK ASPECT** ⁶¹ + **TERRAIN** ⁶¹ or **SPECIAL TERRAIN** ⁶³.
- ◆ And, if exactly 2 steps remain, also ask what sign you see that you're getting close to your destination.
- ☛ If only 1 step remains, pick a Terrain Detail from your destination; **ASK ASPECT** + **TERRAIN** ⁶¹ for one if needed.

Note the terrain alongside the next unmarked box on the journey card, and tell what this landscape is like. (If a terrain is already written by the next unmarked box, perhaps because you Encamped or were lost, don't write anything.)

Now **play the first move that matches** from the list below:

- ☛ If only 1 step remains, try to reach your **Journey's End** ⁴¹.
- ☛ If you have no Tack, you're **Lost** ⁴⁰.
- ☛ If you want a day of rest, **Encamp** ⁴².
- ☛ If you want to abandon your journey, change your destination to your Volume of origin, log success in all remaining boxes except the last, and continue on to today's **Travel Encounter** ⁴⁴.
- ☛ Otherwise, **Journey On** ³⁹.

In most cases after completing the move, you'll be instructed to proceed to a **Travel Encounter** ⁴⁴. Once it's resolved, the day's travel is done. If you've not yet arrived, spend a fitful night here (gaining no benefits from rest) then return to **A Day on the Road** ³⁸.

JOURNEY ON

When the group pushes on toward their destination, pick a leader for today's travel. They'll explain how their unique skills or abilities will help guide the way through this territory, and prepare to roll **2d6**, considering the following modifiers:

- ☞ **-1** if you've led a day of travel since the journey began or you last Encamped (fresh guides and fresh eyes are vital to traversing the Down)
- ☞ **-1** if there are multiple active Dangers
- ☞ **+1** for each point of Tack spent on this roll

Roll the dice and add them together:

- ☞ **10+**: You find a clear way forward: **Log success** ✓ in the next unmarked box.
- ☞ **7-9**: You find a path, but a rough one. Choose one:
 - ⬠ You make little progress but avoid getting lost. Explain why this terrain is so difficult, but what hopeful sign you uncover. **Log failure x** but **recover 1 Tack**.
 - ⬠ You force your way through, but attract unwanted attention. **Log success** ✓, but **Add a Danger** ³³ and explain what portent you see of a lurking threat.
- ☞ **6-**: You lose your way, hopefully temporarily. Choose one:
 - ⬠ **Log failure x** and say why this territory confounds all attempts to navigate through it.
 - ⬠ Or, **try a desperate path**. Roll **d3**: if you can afford this much Tack, pay it and **log success** ✓. If you can't, lose all remaining Tack and **log failure x**; you're now lost.

Continue to a **Travel Encounter** ⁴⁴.

LOST

When you begin a travel day with no Tack, you are lost. Pick a leader for today's travel. They'll explain how their knowledge of the Down, survival skills, or luck will help find a path, and prepare to roll a single **d6**, considering the following modifiers:

- ☞ **-1** if there are multiple active Dangers
- ☞ **+1** if you are a native of the Down
- ☞ **+1** if you successfully make a relevant skill or ability check

Roll the die, praying to whatever gods you think might hear.

☞ **6+**: Choose one:

- ◆ **Log success** ✓ through dumb luck, but remain lost.
- ◆ **Log failure** x but discover a way forward: gain **d3** Tack.

☞ **4-5**: Make a discovery: roll **d3**.

1. **Log failure** x but find a place where you may **Encamp** ⁴² for the day; proceed immediately to that move.
2. Discover a way back to the place you set out from. If you choose to take this path, gain **d3** Tack, change your destination to your Volume of origin, and **log success** ✓ in any remaining journey boxes before the last. Otherwise **log failure** x .
3. Discover a path leading to a random Volume **adjacent** to your original objective (or a random unconnected Volume if this is not possible; **Spark a Volume** ⁶⁰ if necessary). If you choose to follow it, gain **d3** Tack, change your destination, and **log success** ✓. Otherwise **log failure** x .

☞ **1-3**: **Log failure** x, and **Add a Danger** ³³ .

Continue to a **Travel Encounter** ⁴⁴ .

JOURNEY'S END

When facing your final box of the journey Venture, pick a leader to guide you through the home stretch. They'll explain how their leadership, guidance, and morale-boosting helps you through these final miles, and prepare to roll **2d6**, considering the following modifiers:

- ☞ **+1** if more successes ✓ than failures ✕ logged this journey
- ☞ **-1** if more failures ✕ than successes ✓
- ☞ **+1** for each point of Tack spent on this roll, or...
- ☞ **-3** if you're already out of Tack (lost)

Roll the dice to learn where you arrive...

- ☞ **10+**: You reach your destination easily: either *gain 2 Tack* or **Remove a Danger** ³⁴.
- ☞ **7-9**: You reach your destination, but not without trouble. Choose one:
 - ⬠ **An active Danger** ambushes you before arriving, and it's even stronger than expected...
 - ⬠ **Trouble**: play **What's the News?** ⁷¹ and get immediately involved in this situation as you arrive, whether you want to or not.
- ☞ **6-**: There's a complication with your journey's final leg. Choose one:
 - ⬠ **If you still have any Tack**, spend the last of it to reach your intended destination by the skin of your teeth.
 - ⬠ You arrive at an unexpected place: a Volume adjacent to your intended destination.
 - ⬠ You arrive at a **very** unexpected place: **Spark a Volume** ⁶⁰ to learn where you've accidentally stumbled on, incorporating the most recent terrain as a Detail. If possible, add a Route from here to your intended destination.

Whichever Volume you've arrived in, **ASK** for any unknown core Details of it: there should be two each of **THEME** ⁶², **ASPECT + TERRAIN** ⁶¹, and **RESOURCE** ⁶³.

*You can play **In a Volume** ⁶⁷ to get oriented within a new Volume.*

ENCAMP

When the party rests up for a day rather than pushing on during a journey, no progress is made towards your destination (and you don't mark a journey step, success or failure), but you have a chance to heal, reorient, and gather resources.

Each player can choose one activity from the list below. NPCs may take passive actions like *Heal* or *Recharge* but not make rolls. A Solo player may choose two activities.

- ☛ **Scout:** If you are not lost, make a roll for a skill or ability related to hunts, searching, or wisdom. On success, find 1 Tack; otherwise, describe something strange or beautiful you find nearby, or **ASK PROP** 93 for a discovery.
- ☛ **Cover Your Tracks:** Make an appropriate skill check: on success, **Remove a Danger** 34; otherwise, describe an ominous new portent of an existing Danger that you find nearby.
- ☛ **Forage:** find foodstuffs if you're tracking such things, or see **Fungal Foraging** 81.
- ☛ **Heal:** Restore half the damage you've taken. (If using Sliver of Fate, see **Catch Your Breath** 114.)
- ☛ **Recharge:** Say how you bond with one of your fellow travelers, and regain any special or "daily" abilities you've expended, such as magic spells.
- ☛ **Other:** Anything you could normally do on an off day in your system.

After your day of rest, return to **A Day on the Road** 38.

It's dangerous to stay at the same campsite too long. On the second or higher sequential day Encamped, **Add a Danger** 33 at the start of the day, and trigger a **Travel Encounter** 44 after resolving Encamp actions.

ENCOUNTERS

During journeys between Volumes, you might encounter strange situations in the Down. These are not necessarily fights, but challenges, opportunities, etc. When this happens, play **Travel Encounter** ⁴⁴.

After resolving the encounter, spend a fitful night then return to **A Day on the Road** ³⁸ to continue your journey.

Encounters Aren't In the Downcrawl Deck because of their wordier prompts and additional complexity. Even if you've got the Deck, you should get out the dice for Encounters.

TRAVEL ENCOUNTER

When a journey move triggers an encounter, roll 3d6.

THE TOP DIE becomes the **Indicator die**, which reveals the type of encounter from the list below. **Increase it by the number of Dangers**, if any, before reading the result.

THE BOTTOM TWO DICE are the **Encounter Dice**. These are read from top to bottom, as normal, but used differently depending on the type of encounter.

INDICATOR DIE:

❧ 1-2: Opportunity

Use the two Encounter Dice to **ASK OPPORTUNITY** ^{46 (ROLL)}.

You find a useful resource that can be claimed with an easy skill check.

❧ 3: Location

Use the two Encounter Dice to **ASK PLACE** ⁷³ (and if you like, reroll them to also **ASK AMBIANCE** ⁷³): use the left column to get a suitably remote location. **If you choose to explore this place**, ask your guide for details (or **Set the Scene** ⁹¹ in Impromptu or Solo play). Improvise until you arrive at something that feels like a Challenge, Opportunity, or Threat.

❧ 4-5: Challenge

Use the Encounter Dice to **ASK CHALLENGE** ^{48 (ROLL)} and choose one of the given options. Now reroll the two Encounter Dice. Use the top die to

ASK OPPORTUNITY ^{46 (ROLL)} for a category, and the bottom to **ASK THREAT** ^{47 (ROLL)} for a category. Use these results to inspire stakes for success and failure in this encounter.

❧ 6+: Threat

Use the two Encounter Dice to **ASK THREAT** ^{47 (ROLL)}, **OR** choose an active Danger to manifest. You may need to face a hard check, saving throw, or combat to overcome this obstacle.

EXAMPLE: It's time for a Travel Encounter, so the GM rolls 3d6 and gets 2, 1, 3. There are no Dangers, so the top die (2, the Indicator) stays the same. An Indicator Die of 2 means an Opportunity. The GM turns to the Opportunities table and uses the bottom two Encounter Dice (1-3) to look up the result, which is Treasure: Magic Item. Picking "mirror" from the list of inspiration words, the GM describes the party rounding a corner to see a skeletal adventurer, long dead, clutching what looks like an ordinary mirror in their hand...

EXAMPLE: "Okay, we've finished our Journey On, so it's time for a Travel Encounter," Jen announces, grabbing the book. Her Impromptu party is halfway through a perilous journey. Following the instructions under Travel Encounter, Jen rolls 3d6 and gets (from top to bottom) 3, 4, 6.

"But we've got a Danger," Matt points out, tapping *eyes watching in the dark 2-2* on the Danger list, "so that changes the 3 to a 4." Jen reluctantly turns the die to the higher digit.

"An Indicator Die of 4 means a Challenge," she says, reading from the move. "So in that case, the two Encounter Dice are used to **ASK CHALLENGE**. Let's do it." She flips to the Challenge Table and looks for the box indicated by 4-6 (the two Encounter Dice digits from her initial roll). "Oh dang," she says, "I know which one of these options I'm picking. *Path scales a massive chain, each link a hundred feet long*. Cool!" She frowns. "Uh, what next?"

"I think the Travel Encounter rules have a second step if it's a Challenge," Tim says. "We reroll the two Encounter Dice to get an Opportunity category and a Threat category, which will define the stakes of the encounter." Jen rerolls the bottom two dice. "Uh, 3 and 1," she says. "So on the Opportunities Table, a 3 is... Tack. Huh, so this giant chain somehow might get us more Tack if we succeed at this Encounter?"

"Maybe it's like a maze of chains," Matt says. "These huge chains are stretching off in different directions, and one of them is providing a big shortcut on this journey. It's a way better route than the others."

"Oh nice!" Jen says. "Let's go with that. Okay, so the second die is 1, and on the Threats table that's... Monstrous Creatures."

"Oh god no, this is not a good place for a fight," Tim says.

"You know what," Jen says. "You can substitute an active Danger for a Threat any time, right? Wouldn't this be a wonderful slash terrible moment for whatever these eyes in the dark are to catch up with us?" She taps *eyes watching in the dark 2-2*.

"I hate you," Tim says. "It's perfect, but I hate you. OK, so we look up 2-2 in the Threats table and it's... Wicked Folk, Hunting For You. I think... I think they're the Xorgula cultists."

"Cool, so we're slowly navigating our way over this huge mass of tangled chain trying to get to the one that leads to this obviously better path," Jen improvises, "when we start hearing the chains clank behind us... and half a dozen figures clad in familiar purple robes are starting to climb..."

46 OPPORTUNITY

Use the top Encounter Die for category and bottom for subcategory. Use the parentheticals for inspiration.

1: TREASURE

- 1-1 Currency (*still in circulation*)
- 1-2 Currency (*obscure or archaic*)
- 1-3 Magic item (*ring, wand, potion, box, mirror, rope, staff, bag, book, scroll*)
- 1-4 Weapons or Armor (*rare, magic, ancient, set, famous, animate, stylish*)
- 1-5 Trade goods (*spices, ore, rope, furs, lanterns, fungus, tools, toys, seeds*)
- 1-6 Valuables (*artwork, gemstones, rare books, jewelry, drugs, beasts, fabrics*)

2: SHELTER

- 2-1 A safe place; act as if Encamped here today
- 2-2 A secret place; act as if Encamped here today
- 2-3 As 2-1, and roll again on this table for something else found here
- 2-4 As 2-2, and **ASK PROP**⁹³ for something else found here
- 2-5 As 2-1, but already occupied: negotiations may be in order
- 2-6 As 2-2, but **ASK ASPECT**⁶¹ for a detail or complication

3: TACK (ON SUCCESS, FIND D3)

- 3-1 Map (*ancient parchment, recently drawn, forgotten scraps, in skeleton's hand*)
- 3-2 Directions (*scratched on wall, drawn in blood, warning note, old signpost*)
- 3-3 Gear (*compass, rope, lodestone, survey log, scroll of alignment*)
- 3-4 Travelers (*wanderer, cartographer, caravan, pilgrimage, hunter, trader*)
- 3-5 Intuition (*familiar landmark, funny feeling, useful memory, smells right*)
- 3-6 Shortcut (*new fissure, mine tunnel, repaired roadway, leap of faith*)

4: INFORMATION

- 4-1 News about a key plot thread
- 4-2 News about a dormant plot thread
- 4-3 Roll again for the next encounter and save the result: learn
- 4-4 a useful or interesting piece of foreshadowing about it
- 4-5 A new Detail or Local Detail of the destination
- 4-6 A new Detail or Local Detail of a Volume drawn from the Map Deck

5: RESOURCES

- 5-1 Healing (*potion cache, blessed spring, vein of magic, traveling cleric*)
- 5-2 Magic (*regenerating pool, scroll, spellbook, restorative runes*)
- 5-3 Good hunting (*tasty beasts, edible fungus, useful lichens*)
- 5-4 Tokens of safety: **Remove a Danger**³⁴
- 5-5 A Resource from the origin or destination Volume
- 5-6 Fungus: **ASK FUNGAL EFFECT**⁸²

6: PEOPLE OR CREATURES

- 6-1 Animals (*useful byproducts, rideable, friendly, tasty, weird, protective, magic*)
- 6-2 On a Mission (*mapmaker, rescuer, monster slayer, diplomat, scholar*)
- 6-3 Merchants (*bookseller, magic items, potions, info, charms, fungus, armor*)
- 6-4 Old Allies (*people from your past, famous heroes, former companions*)
- 6-5 New friends (*potential follower, musician, storyteller, leader, inventor, healer*)
- 6-6 Free Spirits (*bard, explorer, artist, friendly monster, retired adventurer*)

THREAT

Use the top Encounter Die for category and bottom for subcategory; or, use the Index from an Active Danger. Use parentheses for inspiration.

1: MONSTROUS CREATURES

- 1-1 Creepy Crawlies (*spiders, gigapedes, phase locusts, dire mosquitoes, wasps*)
- 1-2 Dead Things (*ghosts, skeletons, golems, mummies, living puppets*)
- 1-3 Primal Horrors (*fire devil, living nightmare, dark waters, hungry god*)
- 1-4 Megabeasts (*worm, lizard, dragon, moth, construct, demon, insect queen*)
- 1-5 Foul Magicks (*enchanted object, animated armor, abomination, living curse*)
- 1-6 Bizarre Beasties (*oozes, cubes, mists, golems, manticores, hungry fungus*)

2: WICKED FOLK

- 2-1 Old Foes (*returning villains previously defeated; evildoers from PC's pasts*)
- 2-2 Hunting For You (*assassins, spies, bounty hunters, obsessive fans, minions*)
- 2-3 Thugs and Criminals (*bandits, toll trolls, drug dens, greedy thugs, unhinged*)
- 2-4 Deceivers (*con artists, shapeshifters, snake oil, scammers, liars*)
- 2-5 Bad Magicians (*necromancer, cultists, power-hungry, portal openers*)
- 2-6 Cruel Masters (*industrialists, polluters, press gangers, fascists*)

3: THREAT OF DAMAGE

- 3-1 Terrain (*razor-sharp rocks, falling stalactites, crumbling ledge, slippery slope*)
- 3-2 Trap (*pits, blades, sparks, flames, crushing, drowning, frozen, buried, blinded*)
- 3-3 Catastrophe (*earthquake, avalanche, volcano, sinkhole, ceiling collapse*)
- 3-4 Nature (*toxic moss, strangling vines, thorns, acid, poison spores, wild animal*)
- 3-5 Bad Air (*extreme temp, howling winds, toxic spores, sulfur vents*)
- 3-6 Flash Flood (*rushing current, boiling water, panicked creatures*)

4: THREAT TO TACK (ON FAILURE, LOSE D3)

- 4-1 Confusing terrain (*maze, mirrors, monotonous tunnels, twisty passages*)
- 4-2 Mistake (*wrong turn, map upside down, missed junction, second-guessing*)
- 4-3 Convoluted (*maze, backtracking, cramped, vertical*)
- 4-4 Missing piece (*map smudged, notes lost, directions wrong, landmark gone*)
- 4-5 Bad intel (*false sign, con artists, confused vacationers, map's plain wrong*)
- 4-6 Re-route (*caved-in, bricked-over, infestation, bad magic, flooded, mudslide*)

5: THREAT TO JOURNEY (ON FAIL, CAN'T ENCAP OR REMOVE DANGER)

- 5-1 Treacherous Route (*steep, sharp, drop-off, crumbling,)*
- 5-2 Weakened (*disease, choking dust, scorching and humid,)*
- 5-3 Can't Stop (*rising water or lava, swarm, piercing wind, demons, army*)
- 5-4 Bugged Down (*mud, marsh, ooze, crumbling surface*)
- 5-5 Endless (*long and straight, never changes, never gets less steep*)
- 5-6 Forced off-course (*chased, rockslide, bridge collapses, flash flood*)

6: UNWANTED COMPLICATIONS

- 6-1 with Companions, reroll if none (*sick, redshirted, betrayal, captured, injury*)
- 6-2 with Treasure (*tax collectors, gambling den, stolen, fake, cursed, rotten*)
- 6-3 with Knowledge (*volume Detail/friendship/comforting truth revealed false*)
- 6-4 with a Danger (*worse than realized, here already, stalking innocents, multiplied*)
- 6-5 with Equipment (*broken, cursed, lost, stolen, coveted, redecorated*)
- 6-6 with Reality (*gravity, time, illusion, memories, mirror world*)

48 CHALLENGE

Find the box you rolled then pick one prompt (continued on following pages).

1-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undead guardians of an ancient bier • Every inch covered in historic carvings • Excited costumed travelers en route to major festival; completely, utterly lost • Crumbling bridge over hazard
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traveling performers • Ancient battlefield, 1000s of skeletons • Cocky sword-for-hire, looking for new employment • Ornate, long-abandoned railroad cars
1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grotto, six thrones, locked chest • Slippery stairs • Traveler's waystation built into natural feature • Dusty gearwork fortune-telling machine: first one is free and demonstrably true
1-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area filled with dense mist; can't see more than a few feet ahead • Way overgrown with tiny, sweet-smelling blue-green mushrooms • Dead End • Burrow of adorable, wounded animal with hungry cubs
1-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caravan of suspicious travelers • Massive rubbish pile, some city's garbage chute: salvage and scavengers • Sump ahead filled with flammable, unbreathable orange mist • Abandoned, crumbling village; no bodies; only one thing the looters missed
1-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand-off between opposing forces; a diplomat is needed • Chokepoint ahead: signs of ambush • Chambers draped in curtains of black felt, swaying in unfelt winds • Wild beast
2-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thousands of unbound pages litter the ground, fragments of an immense epic • Fifty-foot gap in the path with a hazard in between • Blind albino birds • Panicked wanderers fleeing a biblical swarm of ordinary insects
2-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starving, lost teenager • Huge rotating sphere; players must slip in when entrance lines up • A difficult vertical climb • Wizard's tower built into natural feature
2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospital for terminally cursed patients, staffed by silent Formic Nuns • Lair; owner is annoyed by whatever's transpiring here • Abandoned carnival • Dripping acid ooze

2-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Way ahead increasingly cluttered with webs; way back riddled with hidey-holes • A vein of a precious mineral • Massive obsidian rod emitting constant spears of lightning • Path joins with what looks suspiciously like a racetrack; distant rumbling begins
2-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tunnels constrict till you can barely wriggle through • Crack oozing bright orange goo with a fungal effect at drug strength; ownership contested • Opulent funicular, donation box, twenty-minute ride, windows painted black • Mysterious, ancient book, alone on a jade plinth
2-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walls broken by glittering crystals, razor-sharp • Slippery slope of butterscotch flowstone • Small, cheerful homestead; everyone inside is very recently dead • Astonishing viewpoint
3-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight-sided pillar, 1000 feet high: same declaration of principles carved in 8000 languages • Settlers with a busted cart • Seemingly abandoned military outpost • Sinkhole with increasingly sloping sides
3-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tendrils of Fuzz converge at an oasis of warmth and light • Devil's Breath Zipline, three miles long: safe, probably • Path becomes wide level roadway, suspiciously well-lit and maintained; • Ticking clock until a hazard becomes a real problem
3-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automated ooze farm • Yoked rock-creatures digging a tunnel; master is away, for now • Desecrated tomb • A far-off, ominously blinking light
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hunter stalking a (<i>possibly imaginary</i>) predator • Hurricane winds rush through choke-point between zones of different pressure • Deep blue pool blocks the path, something sparkling at the bottom • Stampede!
3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boulder-hops across a zone of hazards • Immaculately detailed miniature city, 200 feet wide; shame if combat here • Lair of sleeping monsters • Something is wrong with the gravity
3-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Rain" courses down from stalactites above, soaking everything • Earthquake! • Something is stalking from the shadows • Ancient ship from the surface, wedged in a crevasse

4-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sealed-off bunker with “warning: magical contamination” signs • Slope of loose gravel and boulders, delicately balanced • Grandma Ebb’s Megapede Farm: expensive, but take an extra journey step if everyone buys a megapede mount • Dusty, pompous court of a room-sized kingdom, population three
4-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zealous religious crusaders want converts, won’t take no for an answer • Swaying catwalks • Grove of enchanted mushrooms • Lava flow erupts through the walls
4-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long, straight passage with no side exits • Fallen road sign; two groups of travelers arguing over which way it should point • A tiny trading post • Toll bridge over a hazard
4-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lonely mushroom farmer, will make trades for good stories • Sprung pit trap • A sealed tomb and its eternal guardians • Cheerful traveling portrait artist, gleaming teeth; people in the portraits are all screaming
4-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gear-room of an enormous clock keeping an unfamiliar time, still working • Pilgrims on a holy quest • A dead or dying traveler • Way forward narrows; single-file only
4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lighthouse, beacon shining brightly; no obvious purpose • Refugees from a far-off war need an escort to safety • Path scales a massive chain, each link a hundred feet long • Plucky girl collecting funds to resurrect dead grandpa, who she has in a cart
5-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ceiling lit by thousands of glowing dots of fungus • Path climbs the torso of forgotten hero’s colossal statue • A cube of magical darkness • Medical emergency
5-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slide down a long, oozing shaft • Huge out-of-control automaton • Someone studying an old ruin needs assistance translating some glyphs • Competing ferry boats
5-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inn hosting a bardic competition • Ancient coliseum • Ducking under ceiling with razor-sharp stalactites • Two mute children

5-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dripping sign: “Flash Flood Warning” • Vast hollow sphere, floating light in exact center • A winding stair • A gallery of eight huge statues
5-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old man in a deep pit needs help • Magic mirror shows what you most want • Friendly gelatinous cube, speaks through half-dissolved body’s mouth; wants to be an adventurer • Heavily armored inspectors need to check the party for Blight
5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wagon of slaves and slavers under siege by freedom fighters • Discarded, enormous sculptures • Strange animal pinned by collapsed rock • Pile of treasure in center of route, obviously a trap
6-1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rope across hazard to precarious reward • Former enemy of the party, claims to be reformed • Happy family of four living in large glass terrarium; beg you not to break the seal • Would-be bandits attacked by their enraged mount
6-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gallery filled with countless statues of one party member • Sleeping leviathan with dungeon inside • Way ahead blocked by rubble, might be possible to clear • Muddy footprints suddenly vanish
6-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enormous mural has vital clue about history of this area • A dormant campaign plot thread is resurrected • Two aged knights claim one always lies and other always tells the truth, but they’re just having you on • Way ahead choked by tall spindly plants with closed, vibrating buds
6-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mini-dungeon filled with traps, pressure plates, weighted plinths • Thieving bat-things stealing your stuff • Dust-choked gallery, enormous orrery • Huge monster, way too powerful: run!
6-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travelers seem to have died peacefully in their sleep, leaving their mounts behind • Ancient glyphs might be a warning about the way forward; can anyone read them? • A conclave of tiny spore-fairies, barely large enough to see • An automaton lies in pieces, along with assembly instructions
6-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An unexpected hazard for the terrain, i.e. fire in an ice maze • Be absolutely silent, or you’ll wake The Creatures • Slippery floor • The troll demanding a toll is actually a softie

MEETING FOLK

One might be able to list all the races of intelligent creatures found on the surface, but in the endless depths there are more peoples and cultures than can be counted. Explorers will frequently meet new kinds of people, called Folk, especially at crossroads or watering holes. Much like a certain galaxy far, far away, there's always a weird new somebody ordering drinks at the next cantina.

The Folk of your Down will be different than anyone else's, and you will never stop meeting new ones. New Folk appear in slightly different ways depending on your style of play:

- ✦ **In a Guided game**, the GM can create fully defined Folk between sessions, by **ASKING** for all six Details of a Folk and giving them a name (see next section); or improvise them when needed as described below.
- ✦ **In Impromptu or Solo play**, Folk are built one piece at a time during play. When you need a new character (see **Greetings, Stranger** ⁹⁴) you'll first find out if they're a new Folk, and **ASK APPEARANCE** ⁵⁴ for your first impression if so. As play continues, each time you encounter this Folk again you can **ASK** for one additional Detail (**APPEARANCE** ⁵⁴, **FOLK CONCEPT** ⁵⁵, or **REPUTATION** ⁵⁶) until they are fully defined.

/// You may find new Details surprise you or change your evolving conception of a Folk. This is to be expected: encountering new cultures is always unpredictable.

FOLK DETAILS

A fully defined Folk is made up of a Name and six Details, which come in three types. Details are usually determined by **ASKING** the given table.

- ❧ An **APPEARANCE** ⁵⁴ Detail suggests what this Folk looks like on the surface, their external features: things like *Claws and Teeth*, *Many Arms*, or *Shapeshifters*.
- ❧ A **FOLK CONCEPT** ⁵⁵ Detail suggests a Folk's actions or beliefs: what they are most interested in, defined by, running from, or driven to. A Concept is usually combined with a second **ASK** of a listed option (from **TERRAIN** ⁶¹, **RESOURCE** ⁶³, **IDEA** ⁹³, or an existing Folk or Volume) to create a phrase like *Destroy Safety*, *Strange Relationship to Volcanoes*, or *Can't Come Near the Pillarlands*.
- ❧ A **REPUTATION** ⁵⁶ Detail suggests how this Folk are seen and judged by outsiders, the myths and stereotypes they must navigate: things like *Superstitious*, *Lazy*, or *Mysterious*.

Details may be rewritten to better capture your ideas:

Meeting a new Folk in a Solo game, I **ASK APPEARANCE** (as instructed in **Greetings, Stranger**) to get my first impression. The result is *Antlers or horns*. I decide this folk has huge moss-encrusted antlers, so I take a new blank index card for my Folk Deck and record "Mossy Antlers" as an Appearance Detail. I don't yet know what this Folk is named.

Later I learn more about this people, and can choose to Ask for another Detail. I decide to **ASK FOLK CONCEPT** and get *Antithesis Of*. The instructions tell me to pair this with a Terrain, Resource, Idea, or existing Folk or Volume. I decide a Terrain might be interesting here, so I **ASK TERRAIN** and get *Railroad*. I decide this means that these Folk are rooted in place; they never move far from where they were born, except perhaps once in their life to mate. Rather than record this Detail as "Antithesis Of: Railroad," I rewrite it as "Rooted," their first Concept Detail.

INTERPRETING APPEARANCE

Most results might be literal, metaphorical, or suggestive. *Heat and flames* could mean literal fire elementals, bodies painted with red-orange pigment, or experts in seduction whose eyes are irresistible fire. Seemingly contradictory results are the best: *Unusually large* and *Unusually small* might together suggest a folk huge for snails but tiny for people, large eyes but little teeth, small bodies but looming psionic powers...

54 APPEARANCE

Use parentheses for inspiration.

1-1 Unusually large

1-2 Mercurial (*shapeshifters, illusionists, planewalkers, masked*)

1-3 Arms (*none, many, long, tentacles*)

1-4 Legs (*one, four, many, long, multi-jointed*)

1-5 Eyes (*strange, enchanted, many, one*)

1-6 Head (*enlarged, unusually positioned, multiple, none*)

2-1 Hair (*strange, styled, lots, none*)

2-2 Stone and earth

2-3 Gills and scales

2-4 Sleek and muscled

2-5 Gears and machinery

2-6 Wings or feathers

3-1 Shadows and translucence

3-2 Bones and rot

3-3 Twins or packs

3-4 Shells or spines

3-5 Simple costume (*rags, monochrome, practical, none*)

3-6 Need gear to survive (*rebreather, armored suit, wheeled tank, magic helm*)

4-1 Unusually small

4-2 Memories (*short, long, specific, strange*)

4-3 Nose (*beak, trunk, sensitive, none*)

4-4 Face (*kindly, distorted, more than one, none*)

4-5 Sounds (*noisy, silent, captivating, painful*)

4-6 Insensate (*blind, color-blind, deaf, only hear high/low frequencies*)

5-1 Hybrids or mutants (*made of machinery, hybrid parts, dead pieces, aether*)

5-2 Heat and flames

5-3 Claws and teeth

5-4 Antlers or horns

5-5 Moss and fungus

5-6 Humps and pouches

6-1 Snouts and tails

6-2 Squishy or gelatinous

6-3 Whiskered or bearded

6-4 Colorful

6-5 Elaborate costume (*robes, silks, battle gear, ceremonial*)

6-6 Movement (*graceful, clumsy, unusual, infrequent*)

FOLK CONCEPT

If your top die is not **6**, you need a noun to go with this prompt. **ASK** one: **TERRAIN** ⁶¹, **RESOURCE** ⁶³, **IDEA** ⁹³, or choose an existing Folk/Volume.

1-1 Experts	3-4 Strange relationship
1-2 Love or Worship	3-5 Antithesis of
1-3 Extreme views regarding*	3-6 Trade for/with
1-4 Need	4-1 Hate or disgusted by
1-5 Hunt for/in	4-2 Exploit
1-6 Protect	4-3 Perfected survival in/with
2-1 Create or originated	4-4 Destroy
2-2 Conceptual affinity with	4-5 Can't come near
2-3 Searching for perfect	4-6 Once almost destroyed by
2-4 Evolved to live in/with	5-1 Exiled from/by
2-5 Rarely venture far from	5-2 Escaping
2-6 Their legends speak of great	5-3 Feel superior to
3-1 Mystical connection to	5-4 Parasitic/complex rel. with
3-2 Want to improve	5-5 Once in their lives they seek
3-3 Code of conduct inspired by	5-6 In thrall or addicted to
6-1 Navel-gazing, devoted to their own: <i>d6: Minds, Bodies, Beliefs, Superstitions, Pleasure, Dreams</i>	
6-2 Gender: <i>d6: One, Three, Changeable, Private, Unimportant, Complex</i>	
6-3 Reproduction: <i>d6: Egg-laying, Mitosis, Recruitment, Construction, Parasitic, Rare</i>	
6-4 Great makers of: <i>d6: War, Architecture, Food, Textiles, Art, Plans</i>	
6-5 Biological link to: <i>d6: stone, light, each other, a Deity, Fungus, a ghostly realm</i>	
6-6 Language based on: <i>d6: Light, Subsonics, Smell, Movement, Poetry, Misdirection</i>	

Return to **Recovery** ⁶⁸; **Greetings, Stranger** ⁹⁴

EXAMPLE: You roll **4-6**, *Once almost destroyed by*. Consulting the instructions at the top of the table, you see that since your first digit is not **6**, you need a noun to go with this prompt. *Idea* seems interesting, so you **ASK IDEA** and get **2-6**, *Dream*. These people were once almost destroyed by their dreams—cool! You rewrite the Concept as *Deathdream Survivors*. You don't know what this means yet, but it might be an interesting (sensitive?) topic to ask the next member of this folk you meet about...

56 **REPUTATION**

1-1 antisocial	4-1 jolly
1-2 beloved	4-2 kindly
1-3 boring	4-3 lazy
1-4 charismatic	4-4 moralizing
1-5 clueless	4-5 mysterious
1-6 clumsy	4-6 overconfident
2-1 curious	5-1 paranoid
2-2 decadent	5-2 poor
2-3 disgraced	5-3 power-hungry
2-4 dour	5-4 reliable
2-5 eccentric	5-5 revered
2-6 heartless	5-6 ridiculous
3-1 god-touched	6-1 scary
3-2 helpful	6-2 scatterbrained
3-3 honest	6-3 superstitious
3-4 industrious	6-4 violent
3-5 ingenious	6-5 virtuous
3-6 introspective	6-6 wealthy

Return to Recovery 68; *Greetings, Stranger* 94; **PERSON** 74; **THEME** 62

INTERPRETING FOLK REPUTATION

Reputation is the way this Folk are seen by others. This is a kind of stereotype, and should be treated as such: broad generalization at best, slander at worst. Perhaps a folk deliberately chooses to be seen this way to hide a deeper truth, or perhaps only some outsiders think of them like this while others think the opposite. Individuals might have as much or little relation to this as a specific human does to a statement like “All humans are arrogant.” Make a Folk’s reputation a starting point, not a complete characterization.

INDIVIDUAL REPUTATION

You might also use Reputation to characterize one particular person or NPC, providing a quick starting point to their most obvious trait or attitude. See **Greetings, Stranger** 94 for more help quickly defining a new NPC.

THE FOLK DECK

Track each new Folk you invent on blank index cards. Write their name and Details on one side. The other can be used for a portrait, if anyone in your group is artistically inclined. Some moves might ask you to draw from the Folk Deck to choose a random Folk.

Contacts. You might also note interesting NPCs from this Folk you've met on their Folk Deck card, to help jog your memory later.

FOLK NAMES

A Folk's name might be a made-up fantasy word (Tenarians, Quolpas); an evocative or descriptive moniker (People of the Chasm, Night Striders); or a variant of some familiar animal or creature (Deep Frogs, Gem Elves).

If you're stuck for a name, try this technique:

- ✦ **Write down the first and most obvious thing** that comes to mind. Spider-folk that live in cold caves? Maybe Ice Spiders or Cold Crawlers. If you like what you wrote, just go with it: it'll be easy for everyone to remember.
- ✦ If you don't like what you wrote, **rearrange the letters and sounds** until you find a few syllables that sound fantastical and interesting. From the letters in "Ice Spiders" you could get *Sedri*, *Pridic*, *Redisps*, or *Dris*. Adjust spelling or presentation as necessary (*The Ridisps*, *Spiders of Driss*, the *Lost Sedrians*).

You may not know what a folk is called at first, or may not have earned the right to know. You can always delay learning a Folk's true name until a later, more appropriate time.

FOLK NAME & SUMMARY	
<p>The Chitter insectoid construct scavengers</p>	
DETAILS	
hybrids or mutants (made from scavenged parts)	APPEARANCE
Legs (many)	APPEARANCE
Exiled from homes	CONCEPT
	CONCEPT
Mysterious	REPUTATION
	REPUTATION

BUILDING VOLUMES

Volumes are the stages for your ongoing story: places of wonder and possibility worthy of journeying towards and spending time in. The next few pages will help you generate these special places.

- ✦ **In a Guided game**, the GM might create fully defined Volumes between sessions, or might generate them spontaneously piece by piece during play.
- ✦ **In Impromptu or Solo play**, Volumes are built during play. Various moves might prompt you to **Spark a Volume** ⁶⁰ to generate its initial idea: you'll add it to your map and start a Map Deck card for it. In play, you will have various opportunities to **Ask** for new Details about it.

See **Map & Volume** ²⁶ for details about how Volumes are mapped, or **Journeys** ³² about traveling between them.

VOLUME STRUCTURE

A defined volume consists of a *Name*, a *Remoteness*, and six core *Details*. Remoteness describes how hard it is to reach this Volume and how many connections to other Volumes it can have. When you create a new Volume, choose the Remoteness based on what seems narratively appropriate. See **Map & Volume** ²⁶ for details on Remoteness.

Core Volume Details come in three types: **Themes**, **Terrains**, and **Resources**. Once you know four core Details about a Volume, it becomes a little easier to **Plan Your Journey** ³⁷ there.

- ✦ A **THEME** ⁶² Detail provides a general concept for a Volume: what mainly happens there or what its general vibe is like, things like *Prison*, *Utopia*, or *In Decline*.
- ✦ A **TERRAIN** ⁶¹ Detail describes the kind of underground landscape this Volume is part of: things like *Dripping Crypts*, *Crystal Dunes*, or *Endless Ooze*.

To get a Terrain Detail you may always choose one of two options:

- ✦ **ASK ASPECT** ⁶¹ + **TERRAIN** ⁶¹ to get a combination like *Flooded Ruins*
- ✦ **ASK SPECIAL TERRAIN** ⁶³ to get a single unique answer like *Inside Enormous Creature*

- ✦ A **RESOURCE** ⁶³ Detail describes goods, services, or more abstract qualities that might be either **Abundant** or **Scarce** in a particular volume: things like *Water*, *Trade*, or *Magic*.

When creating a Resource Detail, first **ASK**, then decide whether that Resource is *Abundant* or *Scarce* here, and explain why.

Custom Details. As with other Detail types, you can invent Resource Details beyond those listed on the tables. It's totally fine to have a Volume with *Abundant: Dragons* or *Scarce: Stories*, even though these aren't listed on the Resource table.

- ✦ Finally, **Local** Details track everything you've discovered in a Volume during a visit: interesting people, places, news, rumors and events. There is no Table for Local Details: they're a record of what you invent and discover here as your story progresses. Playing **What's the News?** ⁷¹ often results in a new a Local Detail.

NAMING VOLUMES

Give your volume a straightforward Name based on the information you have so far: you don't know enough about it yet to be perfect, so go for obvious. Is it an icy cavern? How about naming it "The Icy Caverns." A

war-torn wasteland? “The Battlelands.” You can always revise the name later, or discover, perhaps, that this place is known by many names...

SPARK A VOLUME

When you hear tell of a new land in the Deep, Deep Down:

- 1. **ASK THEME** ⁶², and **ASK ASPECT** ⁶¹ + **TERRAIN** ⁶¹ to learn the first two Details about this Volume. (If you know one of those answers already, it’s okay to just state it.) Marry the two answers together into a concept for a unique new place.

/// You can always **ASK SPECIAL TERRAIN** ⁶³ instead of asking Aspect + Terrain.

- 2. **Name this Volume.** It’s fine to go with something obvious.
- 3. **Decide its Remoteness:** Known, Sheltered, or Secret.

REMOTENESS	MAX ROUTES	JOURNEY STEPS	EXAMPLES
KNOWN	4	2	<i>big city, famous landmark, crossroads</i>
SHELTERED	2	3	<i>mysterious, special interest, remote</i>
SECRET	1	4	<i>legendary, hidden, isolated</i>

- 4. **Create a Map Deck card** for this Volume.
- 5. **Add it to the map**, unconnected (unless the story or another move suggests an existing connection). See **Map & Volume** ²⁶ for details on the map.

Return to Visit The Map Room ⁶⁹ ; Lost ⁴⁰

A group playing Impromptu style has realized they need a region ruled by a vampire lord. They **Spark a Volume**, but rather than asking **THEME**, they simply write *Vampire Lair* as the first Theme Detail for this Volume. Since they don’t have any preexisting idea about the lair’s territory, they then **ASK TERRAIN** and get *Infested Ashlands*, writing this as the new Volume’s second Detail.

Roll for each column, OR instead **ASK SPECIAL TERRAIN** ⁶³.

1-1 Obsidian	1-1 Maze
1-2 Stony	1-2 Cliffs
1-3 Winding	1-3 Road
1-4 Fractured	1-4 Badlands
1-5 Deep	1-5 Trench
1-6 Narrow	1-6 River
2-1 Beautiful	2-1 Wormcasts
2-2 Vertical	2-2 Junction
2-3 Cramped	2-3 Ossuary
2-4 Flooded	2-4 Mines
2-5 Dripping	2-5 Fields
2-6 Muddy	2-6 Crypts
3-1 Sandy	3-1 Island
3-2 Crumbling	3-2 Dunes
3-3 Sulfur	3-3 Vents
3-4 Ice	3-4 Caverns
3-5 Misty	3-5 Burrows
3-6 Marshy	3-6 Ruins
4-1 Enchanted	4-1 Shafts
4-2 Crystal	4-2 Garden
4-3 Windswept	4-3 Meadows
4-4 Endless	4-4 Wasteland
4-5 Fungus-choked	4-5 Grottos
4-6 Haunted	4-6 Crawlways
5-1 Noxious	5-1 Tunnels
5-2 Enormous	5-2 Pits
5-3 Jagged	5-3 Canyons
5-4 Mossy	5-4 Shore
5-5 Steep	5-5 Chasms
5-6 Lava	5-6 Labyrinth
6-1 Twisted	6-1 Halls
6-2 Steaming	6-2 Forest
6-3 Luminous	6-3 Ashlands
6-4 Altered	6-4 Trail
6-5 Infested	6-5 Edge
6-6 Flowering	6-6 Fissures

62 **THEME**

Choose either the left or right result, or roll one more **d6**: if odd, choose left. For rolls beginning with **6**, **ASK** the referenced table to complete the Theme.

1-1 Mecca	1-1 Anarchy
1-2 Poverty	1-2 Rebellion
1-3 Colony	1-3 Only Young or Old
1-4 Empire	1-4 In Decline
1-5 Booming	1-5 Gears and mechanisms
1-6 Dungeon	1-6 Rare Resource
2-1 Exiles	2-1 Radical Lifestyle
2-2 Failed State	2-2 Ruined by Magic
2-3 Scattered Holdfasts	2-3 Second Chance
2-4 Great City	2-4 Cultural Upheaval
2-5 Lap of Luxury	2-5 Grand Market
2-6 Weird City	2-6 Forbidden Knowledge
3-1 University	3-1 Impending Doom
3-2 Isolationist	3-2 Library
3-3 Quarantined	3-3 Prison
3-4 Rare Magic	3-4 War Zone
3-5 Monster City	3-5 Rival Forces
3-6 Legendary	3-6 Smuggler's Haven
4-1 Dictator	4-1 Necropolis
4-2 Farmland	4-2 Crossroads
4-3 Monumental Project	4-3 Holy Site
4-4 Haunted	4-4 Utopia
4-5 Mine	4-5 Last Bastion
4-6 Trading Post	4-6 Crusaders
5-1 Center of Power for a Folk	5-1 Lazy Villages
5-2 Kingdom	5-2 Ruins
5-3 Lair	5-3 Barely Contained Magic
5-4 Ancestral Homeland of a Folk	5-4 Occupied Territory
5-5 Profoundly Weird	5-5 Place of Healing
5-6 Decadent	5-6 Melting Pot
6-1 Unusual >> PEOPLE ⁷⁴	6-1 Ruled by >> PEOPLE ⁷⁴
6-2 Known for >> PEOPLE ⁷⁴	6-2 Indentured >> PEOPLE ⁷⁴
6-3 Land Of >> PEOPLE ⁷⁴	6-3 Hostile To >> PEOPLE ⁷⁴
6-4 >> PEOPLE ⁷⁴ Held Sacred	6-4 >> PEOPLE ⁷⁴ Gathering Place
6-5 Famous >> PLACE ⁷³	6-5 People Are >> REPUTATION ⁵⁶
6-6 Land Of >> IDEA ⁹³	6-6 Troubled By >> IDEA ⁹³

1-1 Migration Route	4-1 Steaming Fumaroles
1-2 Suspended Over Dropoff	4-2 Ancient Battlefield
1-3 Flowstone Wonderland	4-3 Railroad
1-4 Magical Darkness	4-4 Nesting Grounds
1-5 Wildlife Refuge	4-5 Hot Springs and Geysers
1-6 Underground Sea	4-6 Massive Waterfall
2-1 Roots of the Earthtree	5-1 Strange Physics
2-2 Seismically Unstable	5-2 Toxic Dust
2-3 Endless Ooze	5-3 Inside Huge Geode
2-4 Boulder Fields and Scree	5-4 Hunting Grounds
2-5 Massive Pillars	5-5 Vast Glacier
2-6 Fungal Jungle	5-6 Sandstone Arches
3-1 Mostly Underwater	6-1 Active Volcano
3-2 Massive Cavern	6-2 Spider Webs
3-3 Inside Enormous Creature	6-3 In Motion
3-4 Antimagic Zone	6-4 Precarious Cliffside
3-5 Veins of Ore	6-5 Lava Tubes
3-6 Flowing Magma	6-6 Gem-Studded Caverns

RESOURCE

If defining a Volume Detail, decide whether this is Abundant or Scarce.

1-1 Air	4-1 Laughter
1-2 Animals	4-2 Leaders
1-3 Beauty	4-3 Light
1-4 Community	4-4 Magic
1-5 Crime	4-5 Monsters
1-6 Cruelty	4-6 Open space
2-1 Culture	5-1 Patience
2-2 Defenses	5-2 Plants
2-3 Drugs	5-3 Reason
2-4 Food	5-4 Religion
2-5 Freedom	5-5 Safety
2-6 Fungus	5-6 Secrets
3-1 Healing	6-1 Maps
3-2 Heat	6-2 Tolerance
3-3 Homes	6-3 Water
3-4 Hope	6-4 Wealth
3-5 Justice	6-5 Work
3-6 Knowledge	6-6 Gods

INTERPRETING RESOURCES

Places with an Abundance of Maps have ample adventure opportunities available to acquire Tack; they might be rife with other explorers or home to ancient cartographer libraries. If Maps are Scarce, there are few resources or people here to help explorers plan onward journeys; other than what's gained through regular volume moves, little to no other new Tack can be found.

With an Abundance of Air, this place has good, rich oxygen, and healing and recovery here is twice as fast as normal. A Scarcity of Air means a thin, bad, or toxic atmosphere; recovery is difficult here without special preparations or protection, among other complications.

If you get the same Resource as both an Abundance and a Scarcity, perhaps some social classes are rich in this element while others are starved for it; or perhaps the Volume has two areas with contrasting qualities (a dungeon full of monsters and the well-patrolled fortress outside, for instance); or maybe one type of this resource is common while another is rare.

OTHER NOTES ON VOLUMES

- ✦ When you reach a Volume for the first time, if you haven't learned all six core Details, **ASK** for any remaining unknowns.
- ✦ Details may be rewritten from their original form to flow more naturally or better summarize a synthesis of ideas. For instance, you might get a Terrain Detail of *Vertical + River* and decide to record it as *Immense Waterfall*.
- ✦ A Volume can (and should) continue to be fleshed out beyond its core Details as you explore and learn more about it. To find new stories and leads to investigate in a Volume, try playing **What's the News?** ⁷¹.

LOST VOLUMES (OPTIONAL RULE)

Sometimes you want to introduce a Volume so isolated it's impossible to reach except by completing a special quest or waiting for a key event. To simulate this, use a new Remoteness category, *Lost*, which has the following qualities:

- ❧ **Write question marks instead of numbers** on the map for journey steps and max connections, to indicate you cannot yet reach this Volume. Treat max connections as 0 if relevant for a move's instructions.
- ❧ **You may not learn any Details** about a Lost Volume except as a reward given out by a Guide, perhaps for completing a quest or Venture.
- ❧ **Once you've learned 4+ Details** about a Lost Volume, you may **Visit The Map Room** ⁶⁹ and spend 1 Tack to find a Secret Route connecting there. After doing so, permanently change the Volume's Remoteness to *Secret*: it is no longer *Lost*.

EXPLORING VOLUMES

In between journeys, Volumes are the milestones and destinations on your overall journey through the Down. They're places where the characters can rest and recover, find opportunities to gain more Tack, discover and investigate plot threads, and have adventures.

/// In a campaign focused on exploration, Volumes might be mere pit stops between perilous journeys. In other campaigns, the majority of your time might be spent in Volumes, with journeys merely quick interludes between them.

This section includes a number of moves you can play while in a Volume, including the helpfully named **In a Volume** ⁶⁷ that indexes them all (along with some other useful moves).

As you explore a Volume, track interesting people, places, and situations you've learned as Local Details on the back of the Volume's Map Deck card. This list will help you remember important info both on this visit and if you ever return. (See **Volume Structure** ⁵⁸ for more on Local Details.)

IN A VOLUME

When you arrive successfully at a Volume, log your journey and **earn 1 Tack**. If you like, you can add a Route on the map from your origin to here, if one doesn't already exist.

While in a Volume, any of these options can be played as often as you like.

- ☛ **What's this place like?** Ask your guide. In Impromptu or Solo play, **Set the Scene** ⁹¹ to explore your first impressions, or to learn more about a particular place here.
- ☛ **What's an interesting location here?** **ASK AMBIANCE** ⁷³ + **PLACE** ⁷³ and save it as a Local Detail. If you visit and talk to people here, **earn 1 Tack**.
- ☛ **Can we talk to a local?** Play **Greetings, Stranger** ⁹⁴.
- ☛ **Where can we rest and heal up?** Play **Recovery** ⁶⁸.
- ☛ **Ask for directions.** Get reliable guidance to a well-known destination here (tavern; market; lodgings; etc); or make a skill check to find a more concealed place or person.
- ☛ **What's happening here?** Play **What's the News?** ⁷¹.
- ☛ **Where can we update our map and learn new Routes?** **Visit The Map Room** ⁶⁹.
- ☛ **Where can we find more Tack?** Try **Recovery** ⁶⁸ (Gamble for map scraps), play "What's an interesting location here?" in this move, **Visit The Map Room** ⁶⁹, or ask your guide for a rumor of a place here where Tack might be available, probably not without a quest or Venture.
- ☛ **Where in the Down can I find something?** **Supply And Demand** ⁷⁰.
- ☛ **Ready to move on?** **Plan Your Journey** ³⁷.

RECOVERY

When you seek out a place to relax and recuperate in a Volume, choose an option below and make a roll to heal or otherwise recover expended abilities. You may play this again on a different day by choosing a different option.

- ☛ **A beautiful spot.** Describe a place you find rest and tranquility; optionally add a Local Detail.
- ☛ **A new friend.** Draw from the Folk Deck and **ASK** for one additional Detail about this Folk (**APPEARANCE** ⁵⁴, **FOLK CONCEPT** ⁵⁵, **REPUTATION** ⁵⁶). Who do you meet and how do you learn this Detail?
- ☛ **A quiet room.** Lay low and let your worries and paranoia drift away: **Remove a Danger** ³⁴.
- ☛ **A night out.** **ASK REPUTATION** ⁵⁶ and explain how you got it.
- ☛ **Gamble for map scraps.** Roll **2d6**. On doubles, **gain 2** Tack; except on double **1s**, **lose 2** Tack; if both dice show different values of **4** or more, **gain 1** Tack; otherwise break even.

Return to In a Volume ⁶⁷

VISIT THE MAP ROOM

Every Volume has a Map Room, be it a public message board where explorers post notices and maps scribbled with corrections, or a cobwebbed tower in an ancient ruin, far from light.

When you first visit the Map Room after a journey, describe it. Remove the current Volume from the Map Deck and shuffle it. Lay out up to five cards face down; these are the Archives here.

When you do research in the Map Room, choose an option. Repeat when you like until you run out of Archive cards or Tack.

1. Draw blind from the Archive and choose an option below
2. **Spend 1 Tack** to take a specific card from the Archive or Map Deck (but not the Volume you're in) and choose an option below
3. **Spend 1 Tack** to play **Supply And Demand** ⁷⁰.

Play an option that's possible for this Volume card. Afterwards, **place the card in the Map Deck** (not back in the Archive).

- ☛ **Read the Guidebook.** If this Volume is *unvisited*, **ASK** for one new Detail: **THEME** ⁶², **ASPECT + TERRAIN** ⁶¹, **RESOURCE** ⁶³.
- ☛ **News From Abroad.** If this Volume is *visited*, **ASK** for one new Detail (as above) to replace an existing one, explaining what rumors you hear of a major change.
- ☛ **Mossy Signpost.** If this Volume is *connected* to any other, add a Route between it and your current location.
- ☛ **Secret Route.** If this Volume is *unconnected* to any other, draw from the Map Deck or Archive until you get a place it can connect to, and add a Route between them.
- ☛ **No Longer Passable.** Remove one Route to this Volume at random, and explain why it's no longer in use. If a blind draw, **earn 1 Tack** for uncovering this vital intel.
- ☛ **Rumors of Distant Lands.** **Spark a Volume** ⁶⁰ and connect it to this Volume, or add it unconnected if not possible; add its card to the Map Deck. **Earn 1 Tack** the first time you do this in a new Volume.

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

When you're looking for something in the Deep, Deep Down, spend 1 Tack and declare a **RESOURCE** ⁶³ or invent one, and say whether you're looking for a place where it's Abundant or Scarce. Ask your guide to tell you where it might be found:

- ☛ Somewhere in this Volume (add a Local Detail)
- ☛ In another existing Volume (add a Resource Detail)
- ☛ In a new unconnected Volume (**Spark a Volume** ⁶⁰ with this Resource Detail defined instead of an initial Theme or Terrain)
- ☛ Nowhere known, but learn where else to ask.

The party, stuck in the desolate Scraplands, have decided to **Visit the Map Room** to help figure out their next destination. Anna draws from the Archive here and gets Map Deck card *The Wyrmmroad*, a place previously visited. It's not possible to Read the Guidebook (they've been there before), and it already has its maximum number of Routes (two, since it's Sheltered), so the only options that can be played are *News From Abroad*, *No Longer Passable*, or *Rumors of Distant Lands*. Anna picks *News From Abroad*, and learns that the *Monarchy* that previously ruled the Wyrmmroad now no longer exists, possibly due to the newly drawn Theme Detail, *War Zone*. She returns the Wyrmmroad card to the Map Deck: we've learned all we can about it from the Scraplands' archive (at least without expending some resources on deeper research).

Brian wants to take a turn, and is very keen to find a Route leading to *Myconexus*, rumored to be the homeland of his people: this place is currently on the map, but unconnected. With the party's consent, he spends 1 Tack to take up the Myconexus Map Deck card. He can't play *Mossy Signpost* because there's no known Routes leading there, but he can play *Secret Route*. Drawing again from the Map Deck, he gets *The Orangewaste*, an unconnected Volume, and adds a Route connecting it to Myconexus. Both are still difficult to reach, but the odds that the pair will eventually connect to the rest of the map have increased. Brian returns Myconexus to the Map Deck; it will cost another Tack if someone wants to pull it out again.

The group leaves out the remaining unused Archive cards until they depart the Scraplands, in case they want to **Visit the Map Room** again before their departure.

THE NEWS

When you ask characters in a Volume what's going on here, they likely know some news or rumors. These might merely provide some local color, or they might prove intriguing situations you'd like to investigate or get involved in.

- ✦ **In a Guided game**, the GM may have a pregenerated list of local rumors or story hooks, or might generate rumors on the fly as described below.
- ✦ **In an Impromptu or Solo game**, invent interesting news or rumors off the cuff by playing **What's the News?** ⁷¹.

WHAT'S THE NEWS?

When you ask around in a Volume for news and rumors, roll **d6** or choose an option:

1-2: **News about nearby places:**

ASK AMBIANCE ⁷³ + **PLACE** ⁷³ + **NEWS** ⁷² .

3-4: **News about local people or groups:**

ASK (PERSON ⁷⁴ **or PEOPLE** ⁷⁴ **) + NEWS** ⁷² .

5-6: **News that could only happen here:**

ASK NEWS ⁷² and choose a sensible Detail of this Volume (including Local Details) as a subject. If necessary, invent a person, group, or place associated with the Detail.

Describe the story that emerges in a sentence or two and name the place, person, or group involved. Add a new Local Detail or add notes to an existing one to record this development.

Return to In a Volume ⁶⁷; **Greetings, Stranger** ⁹⁴

EXAMPLE: The party is in the Chasm of Secrets, which has as a Theme Detail *Unusual Ghosts*. They've determined through play that the spirits here are obsessively fascinated by the living, but are forbidden by an ancient treaty from entering the Lively Quarter. Later, Carly plays **What's the News?** and chooses "News that could only happen here." She **ASKS NEWS** and gets *Defied a major edict*. Pairing this with *Unusual Ghosts*, she decides the spirit population has recently grown unruly and is increasingly harassing the living...

Choose either column. For news about a place, favor the left column.

1-1 subject of investigation	losing power or influence
1-2 recently robbed or raided	restoring a lost or dilapidated site
1-3 a new leader or mentor	made dangerous/remarkable thing
1-4 become famous across the Down	preparing move to a new Volume
1-5 upcoming once-in-a-lifetime event	made a deal some find unjust
1-6 lost something vital	muttering about ancient prophecy
2-1 a powerful new enemy	pushing major reform
2-2 protecting something secret	learned a powerful new magic
2-3 threatening a prime Volume aspect	came into an unearned profit
2-4 taken over or recruited by bully	in desperate need of heroes
2-5 has vanished	facing financial troubles
2-6 front for something more sinister	new alliance/enmity (ASK PERSON)
3-1 about to receive a vital delivery	has new cross-Volume venture
3-2 worrying new behavior or custom	newly acquired famous landmark
3-3 influencing food/water supply	framed for a heinous crime
3-4 gaining power or influence	wants drastic change here
3-5 established a monopoly	made a terrible mistake
3-6 weird new members or residents	about to vote on existential crisis
4-1 found secret route to new volume	facing public ridicule
4-2 dying	defied a major edict
4-3 stockpile of something unusual	corrupt or fighting corruption
4-4 radically changing	torn between/into rival factions
4-5 odd new boss or owner	has abruptly become (ASK PERSON)
4-6 wanted by opposing sides	compromising their values
5-1 plagued by ethereal beings	new affiliation or membership reqs
5-2 overrun by or hosting refugees	struggling in absence of leader
5-3 about to be closed or fired	delving too greedily and too deep
5-4 visitors or associates getting sick	abducted or abductor
5-5 vexed by huge crack in the ground	has a belief becoming unpopular
5-6 new wondrous substance discover'd	claims to have an invaluable map
6-1 connected to an ongoing plot point	connected to an ongoing plot point
6-2 threatens a Volume Abundance	threatens a Volume Abundance
6-3 cause of a Volume Abundance	cause of a Volume Abundance
6-4 drama with a Volume Theme	could ease a local Scarcity
6-5 drama with a Volume Theme	threatens to worsen local Scarcity
6-6 connected to an active Danger	connected to an active Danger

Choose either column; if this Volume is desolate or unpopulated, favor left.

1-1 Roll again x2	dark	1-1 garden	square
1-2 haunted	new	1-2 monument	sewer
1-3 suspended	crystal	1-3 castle	orphanage
1-4 cursed	fancy	1-4 vista	treasury
1-5 magnificent	charming	1-5 battlefield	bathhouse
1-6 twisted	weird	1-6 stair	hotel
2-1 abandoned	shoddy	2-1 crypt	pier
2-2 dangerous	popular	2-2 oasis	theatre
2-3 sentient	private	2-3 gate	circus
2-4 enchanted	shady	2-4 orchard	cottage
2-5 enormous	cliffside	2-5 tower	auction house
2-6 ancient	specific Folk's	2-6 river	restaurant
3-1 rune-covered	unsavory	3-1 prison	palace
3-2 sanctified	royal	3-2 lake	museum
3-3 famous	District of	3-3 lair	market
3-4 derelict	well-guarded	3-4 vortex	black market
3-5 monster-run	sinking	3-5 temple	junkyard
3-6 secret	favorite	3-6 bridge	farm
4-1 nautiloid	exclusive	4-1 graveyard	arena
4-2 infested	flooded	4-2 maze	social club
4-3 precarious	contested	4-3 tunnel	shop
4-4 azure-bright	disliked	4-4 library	alley
4-5 invisible	restored	4-5 dungeon	school
4-6 noxious	fashionable	4-6 conveyance	mansion
5-1 restful	artist's	5-1 grove	guardhouse
5-2 holy	nomadic	5-2 road	avenue
5-3 buried	quaint	5-3 forge	tavern
5-4 divided	rock-hewn	5-4 fountain	festival
5-5 moldy	fungal	5-5 gallery	cabaret
5-6 repurposed	well-lit	5-6 fortress	bazaar
6-1 golden	secretive	6-1 ruin	zoo
6-2 topsy-turvy	shunned	6-2 machine	factory
6-3 occupied	exotic	6-3 wishing well	guild hall
6-4 historic	proposed	6-4 bog	park
6-5 beautified	wondrous	6-5 hill	hospital
6-6 grotesque	Roll again x2	6-6 fumarole	shantytown

Optionally also **ASK REPUTATION** ⁵⁶ or incorporate a Volume Detail.

1-1 addict	1-1 adventurers
1-2 artisan	1-2 caravan
1-3 artist	1-3 crime ring
1-4 construct	1-4 cult
1-5 beggar	1-5 do-gooders
1-6 relation	1-6 druggists
2-1 child	2-1 druids
2-2 diplomat	2-2 elementals
2-3 disciple	2-3 exorcists
2-4 farmer	2-4 explorers
2-5 fool	2-5 archivists
2-6 fugitive	2-6 family
3-1 ghost	3-1 lamplighters
3-2 guide	3-2 gang
3-3 hero	3-3 fan club
3-4 beast	3-4 hunters
3-5 merchant	3-5 mycologists
3-6 monster	3-6 lich lords
4-1 nomad	4-1 lovers
4-2 parent	4-2 miners
4-3 old friend	4-3 outcasts
4-4 priest	4-4 outsiders
4-5 prospector	4-5 philosophers
4-6 scholar	4-6 politicians
5-1 smuggler	5-1 publisher
5-2 socialite	5-2 religion
5-3 thief	5-3 thieves guild
5-4 warrior	5-4 urchins
5-5 wizard	5-5 witches
5-6 minstrel	5-6 grandmothers
6-1 bartender	6-1 storytellers
6-2 botanist	6-2 union
6-3 reporter	6-3 refugees
6-4 keeper of >> RESOURCE ⁶³	6-4 guild of >> RESOURCE ⁶³
6-5 expert on >> PROP ⁹³	6-5 makers of >> PROP ⁹³
6-6 someone who >> ACTION ⁹³	6-6 group who >> ACTION ⁹³

VENTURES

To help keep track of long-term projects and plans, you can use **Ventures**, a system for tracking challenges that take more than one roll or test to overcome.

/// If you've read the *Journey* rules, you've already come across Ventures, the index cards used to track journeys.

A Venture might be created to track any kind of challenge, from impressing the baronet at a party, escaping a locked dungeon cell, tracking down an escaped murderer, or getting over an addiction to fungal drugs. You should track Ventures on index cards placed somewhere all players can see.

To start a new Venture:

- ✦ **Summarize the challenge** in a few written words, writing these at the top of a blank index card turned long side vertical.
- ✦ **Decide on the scope of this challenge** in terms of how many dice rolls it will take to resolve. This is based entirely on how much space you want this obstacle to take up in your story. Depending on your choice, **draw a column of 3-8 empty boxes** down the left side of your card, leaving space beside each for details you'll fill in later.
 - ✦ One-scene Venture: 3 boxes
 - ✦ One-act Venture: 5 boxes
 - ✦ One episode Venture: 8 boxes

Outline the final box, which will determine the final fate of this Venture.

As you progress through a Venture, whenever you make a roll that directly concerns this problem, log success or failure in the first empty box on the card, and briefly summarize what happened next to it.

⌘ **Log Success** with a check ✓

⌘ **Log Failure** with an x

When only the final box is left, devise a climactic roll that will resolve the Venture. When making this roll,

⌘ **If there are more successes than failures**, take a Bonus

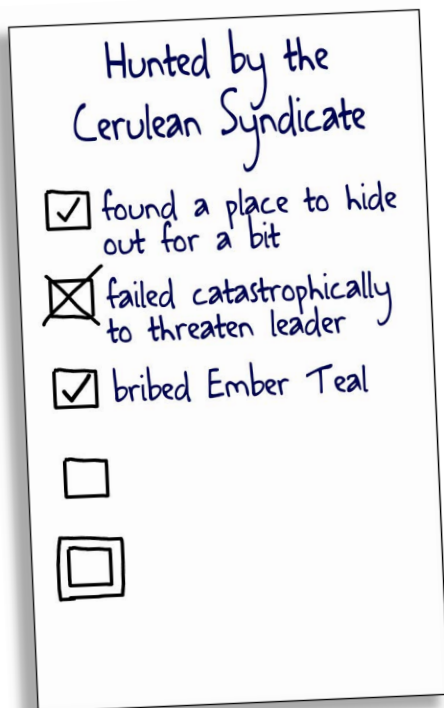
⌘ **If there are more failures than successes**, take a Penalty

⌘ **If successes and failures are evenly balanced**, take neither

Make your roll and narrate the final result of the Venture.

If you failed the Venture, the story should still move forward in an unexpected way. Choose one, or something equally interesting:

- ◆ Learn valuable info, enough to give you one free checked success if you start a follow-up Venture
- ◆ Your failure has upset a static situation, creating a new more urgent problem to solve
- ◆ Your characters gain experience or advancement points
- ◆ You meet a new helpful contact as a result of the failure
- ◆ You gain an interesting item that might be helpful now or later.



VENTURE TIPS

KEEP THEM MANAGEABLE. If a Venture seems like it might take more than 8 rolls to resolve, break off a smaller piece representing the first stage of a larger endeavor.

PROGRESS WITHOUT ROLLING. Sometimes the fiction might suggest progress in the Venture even if you haven't directly made a roll. When

this happens, note the progress alongside the next box down but **black out the box**, indicating you shouldn't count it as either a success or a failure when summing those up for your final roll.

PROGRESS WITH ROLLING. Sometimes in the middle of a Venture you won't have an obvious obstacle in your way or a clear idea how to proceed. You can always request that your guide **ASK THREAT** ^{47 (ROLL)} for something that gets in the way of making immediate progress, or try **Greetings, Stranger** ⁹⁴ to ask someone about your venture and see what emerges.

PARALLEL VENTURES. It's totally fine to have more than one Venture running simultaneously, or turn your attention away from one for a while to focus on something else.

INDIVIDUAL VENTURES. A single player is welcome to use Ventures to track progress on personal goals, too!

PACING IS UP TO YOU. The number of blank boxes you add to a new Venture is you deciding how much space you want this problem to take up in your story. There are no wrong answers. One group might start two Ventures called *Destroy the Ring* (8 steps) and *Befriend Elves* (3 steps). A different group might flip these numbers for a much cozier tale with different narrative focus. It's your story!

CREATIVE USES FOR VENTURES

VENTURES FOR MYSTERIES

Ventures can be used in Impromptu or Solo Play to explore and develop a mystery that no one at the table has a preset answer to.

- ✧ Frame the Venture as a question, like *Who robbed the Mossy Goblet?*
- ✧ Each roll should represent an attempt to answer a smaller question that might build towards the solution, like *How did the thieves get in?* or *Does Burfo the Mole's alibi check out?*
- ✧ After each roll, success or failure, each player should pause to consider everything learned so far, and come up with their best theory as to what the answer might be. This might suggest the next question to investigate.
- ✧ Frame your final challenge in the Venture as a scene that could confirm your best theory and resolve all info learned so far together—or reveal the mystery is more complex than expected, or your theory was disastrously wrong. A failure might represent

a twist, another layer of the onion, or a force more powerful than expected behind the puzzle, depending on what feels right.

VENTURES FOR COMBAT

If you're playing a theatre-of-the-mind campaign more focused on story than battle, a Venture can be a lightweight alternative to tracking hit points and initiative.

- ✦ When a fight begins, add as many boxes as there are players plus one.
- ✦ Give each character a chance to make a roll contributing to victory in the fight.
- ✦ For the climactic roll, decide who will deliver the killing blow or otherwise resolve the encounter, take a Bonus or Penalty based on successes so far as normal, and roll for an outcome.
- ✦ If you fail the combat Venture, the enemy gets away or gains the upper hand (captures you, drives you off their territory, etc).

For more epic battles, you might set up a series of sequential ventures for each “phase” of the combat (*Crack the Dragon's Armor*, *Bloody the Beast*, *Drive It Off the Mountain*.) Failing one of these might replace your planned future Ventures with unexpected alternatives (*Evade the Breath Weapon*).

VENTURES FOR RELATIONSHIPS

A Venture might be used for an extended social challenge, such as trying to impress a king or talk your way out of a rough spot: the approach described above in “Ventures for Combat,” giving each player a chance to contribute before a climactic resolution, works just as well here.

Alternatively, a Venture could track the long-term progression of a relationship over time: steps toward gaining trust, earning a promotion, being forgiven, or the flowering of a new romance.

Usually relationship Ventures won't be the main focus of a story, but will crop up on occasion when paths cross, or other opportunities arise to make progress on a social goal.

DRUGS & FUNGUS

MYCELIA GROW in all conceivable shapes and sizes in the Down, and are used for every conceivable purpose: building material, dyes, clothes, light sources, recreational drugs, and food (though most fungi isn't edible, and some is actively poisonous). Some mushrooms are even intelligent: don't eat those, either. Experienced travelers can learn the careful art of fungal foraging, recognizing fungal archetypes that provide useful effects to explorers; and a cartel of Fungal Druggists has mastered the art of distilling and refining raw mycelia into even more potent tinctures and potions.

Fungal Foraging ⁸¹ is an art that characters can learn from a foraging Master, allowing you to forage wild fungus during journeys (on days when you **Encamp** ⁴²). Foragers can advance in the ranks from Initiate to Expert to Master, though each advancement is its own difficult road. The Fungal Foraging move will instruct you to **ASK FUNGAL EFFECT** ⁸² in various ways to learn how the mushrooms you forage will affect you.

***Fungal Foraging is Optional.** You're free to ignore this chapter if you don't want to use this system.*

FUNGAL DOMAINS

Experts agree that though there are near infinite varieties of fungus in the Down, most can be grouped into one of six archetypal categories or **Domains**. Though novices don't need to concern themselves much with the particulars, know that the six Domains are **Cogni**, **Senti**, **Heros**, **Fodur**, **Mutar**, and **Vocat**.

It's possible to become addicted to a fungal Domain, meaning you need to ingest a drug or fungus from that category each day or suffer consequences: see **Side Effects & Addiction** ⁸⁴ .

YOUR FUNGAL RECORD

As you move from a casual mushroom hunter to a more dedicated forager, keeping a log of all fungus you've discovered, along with its effects and side effects, becomes vitally important. Specifically, only by keeping an accurate log of fungus found can you use **Fungal Foraging** ⁸¹ to find more samples of specific fungal species you've previously discovered.

Your Record should log each batch of fungus or drugs you encounter, storing the following information about it:

- ⌄ **Name**
- ⌄ **Fungal Domain**
- ⌄ **Primary Effect**
- ⌄ **Addiction Index** (same as your roll for Primary Effect)
- ⌄ **Side Effect** (once discovered)
- ⌄ **Number of doses**

FUNGAL FORAGING

When you spend a journey day hunting for mushrooms while Encamped, and have learned the art of Fungal Foraging, roll **2d6** plus 0, 1, or 2 (based on whether you are a foraging Initiate, Expert, or Master).

- ☛ **10+**: Choose an entry from your Fungal Record and find **1d6** more doses of that species, with the same primary and side effect; **or** choose the 7-9 result.
- ☛ **7-9: ASK FUNGAL EFFECT** ^{82 (ROLL)} for the primary effect of this fungus, finding **1d6** doses. You won't know the Side Effect until you try it.
- ☛ **6-**: Find **1d3** doses of (choose one):
 - ⚡ **an unidentified fungus**; you won't know what it does until you try it. When you do, **ASK FUNGAL EFFECT** ^{82 (ROLL)} for a Primary Effect, then immediately **ASK** again for a Side Effect.
 - ⚡ **ASK FUNGAL EFFECT** ^{82 (ROLL)} **for a Side Effect only**: this fungus has no primary effect. Decide if you want to keep it, and tell us what it looks or smells like if you do.

If newly discovered, **ASK FUNGAL NAME** ^{83 (ROLL)} or name this fungus yourself, and record it in your Fungal Record, making sure to note its Addiction Index (which is equal to your dice roll).

Return to **Encamp** ⁴²

Friendly characters can share Fungal Records with each other for the purposes of 10+ results.

Any foraged mushrooms, in addition to their Primary and Side Effects, are also nourishing, acting as one ration. Think of it as dinner and a little light entertainment.

82 FUNGAL EFFECT

Effects last until you next sleep or for 24 hours, whichever comes first.

	DOMAIN	PRIMARY EFFECT	SIDE EFFECT
1-1	COGNI	knowledge of Dangers	Dangers are drawn to you
1-2	COGNI	mild precognition: Bonus if surprised	Mild concussion; Penalty instead
1-3	COGNI	Your left hand can find secrets	It's controlled by player on your left
1-4	COGNI	Tolerably speak or understand any tongue	Words sound like babble
1-5	COGNI	Recover half expended spells or abilities	Weird side effects if using them
1-6	COGNI	You can tell when someone's lying	Intense paranoia
2-1	SENTI	Sharper vision/hearing/scent	Lose that sense
2-2	SENTI	Can smell spores: Bonus to Foraging	Fear of wild mushrooms: can't Forage
2-3	SENTI	See through thin walls	Hallucinations
2-4	SENTI	Eavesdrop from great distances	Constant sound of deafening music
2-5	SENTI	Sense nearby dangers by touching rock	Frequent nosebleeds
2-6	SENTI	Bonus to random stat	Penalty to random stat
3-1	HEROS	Resistant to fire/cold/poison/magic	Highly susceptible to this
3-2	HEROS	Camouflages scent; Penalty to tracker	You smell terrible & can't hide it
3-3	HEROS	Bonus to all rolls, Double Bonus to speed	Exhaustion: Double Penalties
3-4	HEROS	Surefooted: -1 to Encounter roll	Trackable: +1 to top Encounter die
3-5	HEROS	Fall into deep sleep and get real rest	Nightmares; can't rest or recover
3-6	HEROS	Berserker: Bonus to all combat rolls	Can't resist a fight
4-1	FODUR	If squeezed, expels intoxicating liquid	...which gets you blackout drunk
4-2	FODUR	Minor healing when consumed	Minor damage when consumed
4-3	FODUR	Become repugnant to undead	Undead love you. Love. You.
4-4	FODUR	Edible, as 1 ration	Terrible nausea: Double Penalties
4-5	FODUR	No effect but is highly prized by chefs	As spicy as the spiciest hot pepper
4-6	FODUR	Major healing when consumed	Major damage when consumed
5-1	MUTAR	Grip-hands: move on walls or ceilings	Can't walk a straight line
5-2	MUTAR	Become lighter, as in half gravity	Become heavy as if gravity doubled
5-3	MUTAR	Become 25% smaller/larger/wider/taller	More so, to an impractical extreme
5-4	MUTAR	Rarely need to eat/drink/breathe/sleep	Need to do this much more often
5-5	MUTAR	Become shadowy and hard to perceive	You glow brightly
5-6	MUTAR	Skin changes color based on emotions	You only think this happens
6-1	VOCAT	Extreme enthusiasm for everything	Lethargy
6-2	VOCAT	Sparkling eyes: Bonus to NPC interactions	50% chance they flee in horror
6-3	VOCAT	Speak with mushrooms	Mushrooms won't stop speaking to you
6-4	VOCAT	Commanding voice: Bonus to persuasion	Voice super high, everything's funny
6-5	VOCAT	Liked by animals/monsters/people/plants	They're enraged by you
6-6	VOCAT	Bonus to resist fear & intimidation	Constantly afraid

FUNGAL NAME

Names are personal: rather than rolling, you can pick an adjective and noun.

ADJECTIVE	NOUN
1-1 emerald	1-1 truffles
1-2 honey	1-2 morels
1-3 purple	1-3 ears
1-4 shaggy	1-4 ladies
1-5 mud	1-5 trumpets
1-6 slime	1-6 coral
2-1 demon	2-1 jack
2-2 prickly	2-2 cups
2-3 creeping	2-3 turpins
2-4 crunchy	2-4 angels
2-5 candy	2-5 cretins
2-6 bitter	2-6 puffballs
3-1 spotty	3-1 stinkhorns
3-2 shadow	3-2 sludge
3-3 umber	3-3 coils
3-4 gilled	3-4 toadstools
3-5 milky	3-5 mudcaps
3-6 frilly	3-6 stars
4-1 shaggy	4-1 polyps
4-2 burning	4-2 spores
4-3 wrinkly	4-3 bells
4-4 waxy	4-4 funnels
4-5 shining	4-5 lace
4-6 warty	4-6 dew
5-1 crusty	5-1 fingers
5-2 baneful	5-2 stranglers
5-3 liar's	5-3 knobs
5-4 jellied	5-4 rascals
5-5 button	5-5 stalks
5-6 hardy	5-6 drops
6-1 cerulean	6-1 buttons
6-2 crinkly	6-2 floss
6-3 moldy	6-3 fuzz
6-4 whispering	6-4 mane
6-5 puffy	6-5 bonnets
6-6 corpse	6-6 thread

SIDE EFFECTS & ADDICTION

Fungus almost always has both a primary effect and a side effect. While foragers have learned to identify the primary effect based on a mushroom's appearance, the side effects of each batch discovered are always a surprise. There is also a small chance of addiction when you eat raw fungus, which gets larger if you use it in the form of distilled fungal drugs (described further below).

Drugs and Addiction are Optional. Discuss with your group whether or not you want to make addiction or fungal drugs part of your campaign; both are optional parts of Downcrawl's fungal foraging system. Make clear that it's no problem to leave either addiction or drugs out of the game, if anyone would prefer not to have them at the table.

Each time you ingest a drug or fungus, roll 2d6 and read from top to bottom.

- ❖ **If your roll matches the Addiction Index of this substance,** or any other currently in your system, you have become addicted to this fungal Domain! Addicts need to consume a fungus or drug with a primary or side effect from that Domain once per day. If they don't, they suffer **Addiction Consequences** ⁸⁶.
- ❖ **If you don't yet know the Side Effects of this fungus, your roll also reveals them** on **FUNGAL EFFECT** ⁸². Note the side effect in your Fungal Record and record its Domain (if different from the primary effect domain). Side effects last for the same duration as primary effects.

If both of the above conditions match—or, put another way, if you roll the same Side Effect as Primary Effect—there's good news and bad news. The good news is that batch has only a primary effect, and it's far more potent than the listing implies. The bad news is, you're addicted to it now (as per the first bullet point above).

EXAMPLE

Xaigo has foraged several batches of Burning Stars, a fungus with the primary effect of letting the imbiber sense nearby danger (Addiction Index 2-5, part of the SENTI domain). When he eats a batch for the first time, he rolls 2d6 and gets 4-1. This is not the same as the addiction index (phew). Looking up the 4-1 Side Effect on **FUNGAL EFFECTS**, he learns that the Burning Stars are also going to get him blackout drunk...

Later, Xaigo eats another Burning Star. Even though he knows the side effect, he still needs to roll 2d6 to check for addiction. Unfortunately, this

time the dice come up 2-5, matching the Addiction Index! Xaigo is now addicted to the **SENTI** domain. He'll need to eat more Burning Stars—or any other fungus with a **SENTI** primary or side effect—once a day or start to suffer.

Later, Sheldra forages for fungus and also rolls 2-5 as a Fungal Effect. This fungus has the same primary effect as a Burning Star—letting the imbiber sense nearby danger—but it's a different species, with its own name and (yet-to-be-learned) side effect. However, since it's also in the **SENTI** domain (along with any species with an Addiction Index starting with 2), Xaigo would also be able to eat these to slake his addiction...

ADDICTION CONSEQUENCES

Each time you begin a new day addicted to a fungal domain, gain 1 Crave.

When you make any roll while having 1+ Crave, you must either take a Penalty for each point you have, or take no Penalty but gain 1 Crave.

When you fail a roll because of Crave, ask another player to choose 1:

- ☛ They describe how your behavior (distraction, nervous tics, weird phobias, altered perceptions etc) caused you to fumble your roll.
- ☛ They describe what price they pay to help you succeed anyway.

As Crave increases, you become increasingly paranoid, delusional, unreliable, or obsessive. **If you reach 5 Crave,** you lapse into a catatonic state: you can follow directions and take simple actions, but automatically fail all rolls (and can no longer choose to gain more Crave instead: Crave can not rise above 5).

When you ingest any drug or fungus with a Primary or Side Effect in a Domain you're addicted to, if you have any Crave, immediately reset it to 0 and take a Bonus to your next roll.

When you attempt to break an addiction, you must reach 5 Crave and have gone five days without consuming any drugs or fungus.

- ☛ **Start with a pool of 6d6.** Each friend who spends at least a day helping with your recovery can remove one die from the pool. Up to four dice can be removed this way.
- ☛ **Roll the remaining dice.** If no single-digit Addiction Indexes of any Domain you're addicted to appear, you've broken one addiction: suffer for 24 hours then remove all Crave.
- ☛ **Otherwise,** suffer for 24 hours then reset to 1 Crave. You are still addicted.

FUNGAL COMMERCE

The buying, selling, and refining of fungus is among the Down's most widespread and lucrative economic engines. The Fungal Druggist guilds have a near monopoly on this operation, however, tightly regulating and controlling how fungal goods may be bought and sold. Their chapters are nearly everywhere: any community of decent size has at least one vendor, regardless of local laws on the matter.

SELLING RAW FUNGUS

Foraged fungus may be sold to a licensed Druggist for a modest profit, depending on the effects and side effects. (Druggists will rarely purchase batches unless you can provide a reliable report of both.)

Selling fungus to unlicensed third parties is a dicey proposition, with guilds often cracking down (legally and otherwise) on those peddling what they deem “dangerous, raw, untested, unrefined” mushrooms. The real danger, naturally, is not giving them a cut.

TRADES

If no money is changing hands, the guilds will generally ignore small-volume trades between discreet parties. If you befriend a fellow forager, **ASK FUNGAL EFFECT** ⁸² twice, to get a Primary and Side Effect: this is what is available for trading in a narratively appropriate quantity. If you'd like to offer a trade, propose something from your collection (possibly using a relevant skill to sweeten the offer), and see if you can arrive at a mutually beneficial exchange.

FUNGAL DRUGS

Distilling fungi into more potent medicines (or, let's be clear: drugs) is a prime area of research, practice, and profit for the Druggist guilds. The fruits of such labor are widely available in most populated Volumes through both official and unofficial channels.

Taking a fungal drug works the same as consuming raw fungus, except:

- ❧ **Drugs have only a single effect**, and...
- ❧ **They're doubled in potency** compared to the Fungal Effect description. Bonuses are doubled, minor effects become major, and so on. If you're not sure what it would mean to enhance an effect, ask your guide for help.

- ✦ **Drugs have only a single-digit Addiction number** matching their Domain. This means they are much more addictive than raw fungus: only the first digit of your consumption roll needs to match to trigger an addiction!

BUYING DRUGS

Each Fungal Druggist specializes in a particular Domain: you can seek out a particular specialist, or roll **d6** to get one at random (using the first number on **FUNGAL EFFECT** ⁸² to get a Domain).

Choose or roll a number from 1 to 6 representing the scale of this Druggist's operations, from **1-Junkie** up to **6-Kingpin**. Roll this many **d6s**: this Druggist is currently offering drugs from their Domain with Primary Effects matching the numbers shown. Add all the dice together to get the maximum number of doses available here (usually at a hefty price).

You've found a well-stocked fungal drug shop (scale **4**) specializing in the **MUTAR** fungal domain (which is everything starting with 5 on the Fungal Effects table). To check out their wares, you roll **4d6** and get **1, 2, 2, 5**. This druggist therefore has **MUTAR** drugs available with the Fungal Effects listed under **5-1, 5-2, and 5-5**. The maximum quantity of each that this proprietor could get you is **10** doses (the four digits from your roll added together).

To name a drug, **ASK FUNGAL NAME** ⁸³ for a noun only, and prefix it with one of the following words: *uncut, refined, pure, smooth, straight, powdered, essence of, blended, distilled, clarified, filtered, augmented, ashed, calcined, red, blue*.

Track drugs in your Fungal Record, starring them to keep them distinct from raw fungus.

Poisons. In the right Volume, you might find a Poisoner who offers drugs with only Side Effects (still doubly potent). Poisons are highly illegal and officially disavowed by the Druggist Guilds, who certainly would never dream of trafficking in such things.

SELLING DRUGS

Unless you are a licensed member of a Druggist guild, this is a good way to get a hit taken out on you.

IMPROMPTU PLAY

Playing *Downcrawl* with no GM can be an intoxicating, serendipitous adventure. You're all exploring the Down together, with no one knowing in advance what you'll find and what will happen next. The core moves and rules are already designed to work well in this mode of play, but this section offers a few tips and a few custom moves specifically for Impromptu players to help create stories together.

MATERIALS NEEDED

In addition to the **standard materials** 7, for Impromptu play it's especially helpful to have printouts of the key moves that everyone will often be using. You can find these online at xxx.xxx.xxx.

GUIDING EACH OTHER

Many moves instruct you to “ask your guide” for a reaction or an answer. In Impromptu play, you can ask anyone else at the table to be your temporary guide when you come across one of these prompts, or any time you need an idea, a scene partner, or a helping hand. Everyone in this play mode has equal power (and shared responsibility) to help bring the world to life.

IMPROMPTU MOVES

The moves on the next few pages help Impromptu players with a couple specific situations that come up in this style of play:

- ◆ **Set the Scene** ⁹¹ to find out what a new place looks and feels like
- ◆ **Greetings, Stranger** ⁹⁴ when meeting a new NPC
- ◆ **That Sounds Tricky** ⁹² to nudge each other to make skill checks
- ◆ **Find Inspiration** ⁹² to inspire an answer to a question

To be added: more introduction to this play style, examples, etc.

SET THE SCENE

When you want more detail about the world around you, ask the table:

☞ **What do we see here?**

(Or ask any other appropriate question, like *What's changed since we last visited?* or *What clues do we find at this crime scene?*)

If playing with the Downcrawl Deck, deal one card to each player. Any word on your card can be used to inspire a potential response. **Without the Deck**, anyone who needs it can **Find Inspiration** ⁹². In either case you're free to answer also from your own imagination.

Anyone can start to improvise an answer to the question, saying just a sentence or two that begins to paint a picture. Anyone else can respond with one of three key phrases:

☞ **That's Right, And...** Build on what you just heard to add additional detail.

☞ **It's Even Stranger...** Add a weird or wonderful twist to what was just said.

☞ **We Also See...** Turn to a new facet, impression, or detail of this place, and begin to tell us about it.

Continue saying key phrases and adding details as long as you like. When the person who asked the original question is satisfied, they say one final key phrase to wrap up the move:

☞ **The Scene is Set.**

Return to Travel Encounter ⁴⁴; *In a Volume* ⁶⁷

*Solo players, see **Set the Scene (Solo)** ¹⁰² for a version of this move rewritten to be more clear for a single player.*

FIND INSPIRATION

When you need a prompt to help inspire you, ask one of the following tables depending on need.

- ⌄ Adjective or style? **ASK QUALITY** 93
- ⌄ Evocative word or concept? **ASK IDEA** 93
- ⌄ Something happening? **ASK ACTION** 93
- ⌄ Item or discovery? **ASK PROP** 93
- ⌄ Concept or domain? **ASK RESOURCE** 63
- ⌄ Affect or manner? **ASK REPUTATION** 56

These tables all appear on the next page for quick reference (some also appear elsewhere in the book).

Return to Set the Scene 91, *Greetings, Stranger* 94

THAT SOUNDS TRICKY

When someone tries to do something that might require a roll to resolve, gently remind them by saying this phrase. Pause to negotiate the details of the roll before continuing the story.

	QUALITY	IDEA	ACTION	PROP	RESOURCE	REPUTATION
1-1	ancient	abyss	ambush	animal	air	antisocial
1-2	unseen	beasts	survive	bone	animals	beloved
1-3	ash	beetles	embrace	book	beauty	boring
1-4	joyful	cathedrals	tremble	bride	community	charismatic
1-5	wayward	cultists	chase	coinpurse	crime	clueless
1-6	crimson	doctrine	steal	fool	cruelty	clumsy
2-1	cruel	dragons	crawl	gemstone	culture	curious
2-2	crystal	ministry	descend	gift	defenses	decadent
2-3	cursed	gardens	devour	junk	drugs	disgraced
2-4	whirling	ghosts	dig	knight	food	dour
2-5	decadent	giants	discover	lair	freedom	eccentric
2-6	dream	golems	disguise	magma	fungus	heartless
3-1	exiled	scrolls	convince	map	healing	god-touched
3-2	elegant	labyrinths	explore	minion	heat	helpful
3-3	feral	alchemists	fight	mist	homes	honest
3-4	serene	treasure	harvest	monster	hope	industrious
3-5	icy	mirrors	flee	nest	justice	ingenious
3-6	impossible	symphony	heal	plant	knowledge	introspective
4-1	lonely	ooze	hunt	potion	laughter	jolly
4-2	lost	court	hurt	rope	leaders	kindly
4-3	riddle	cities	mutate	route	light	lazy
4-4	fungal	roads	crave	rubble	magic	moralizing
4-5	plague	shadows	poison	sand	monsters	mysterious
4-6	mesmeric	shamans	remember	scroll	open space	overconfident
5-1	rainbow	sea	rescue	shrine	patience	paranoid
5-2	rival	skeletons	reveal	spark	plants	poor
5-3	royal	spiders	scout	spyglass	reason	powerhungry
5-4	sacred	statues	scream	trap	religion	reliable
5-5	screaming	tombs	shatter	trapdoor	safety	revered
5-6	sleeping	tentacles	struggle	treasure	secrets	ridiculous
6-1	quicksilver	thrones	trade	vermin	tack	scary
6-2	stolen	wanderers	impress	water	tolerance	scatterbrain'd
6-3	titanic	wasteland	unlock	waypoint	water	superstitious
6-4	dueling	wind	warn	weapon	wealth	violent
6-5	warrior	witches	whisper	wind	work	virtuous
6-6	wind-up	worms	wither	>>PERSON	gods	wealthy

GREETINGS, STRANGER

When you meet a new character, first determine what Folk they are (if you don't know) by rolling any die:

- ☛ **If it's even**, shuffle and draw from the Folk Deck. You can **ASK** for one additional Detail about this Folk (**APPEARANCE** ⁵⁴, **FOLK CONCEPT** ⁵⁵, or **REPUTATION** ⁵⁶) if they do not yet have two of each type.
- ☛ **If it's odd**, so are they: this is a Folk you've never seen before. **ASK APPEARANCE** ⁵⁴ for your first impression, and start a new Folk Deck card for these people. You don't yet know what they're called: but once you've learned a few more Details, you'll know enough to name them.

Pick a volunteer to portray this character and hand them the Folk Deck card. **Give them a name** by grabbing letters and phonemes from the card (or via any other means you like).

As needed but not before, use the following tools to help define this character:

- ☛ **Attitude? Occupation?**
ASK REPUTATION ⁵⁶ + **PERSON** ⁷⁴ .
- ☛ **What are they excited to talk about?**
ASK RESOURCE ⁶³ or **IDEA** ⁹³ .
- ☛ **Need some local gossip?** Play **What's the News?** ⁷¹ .
- ☛ **Do they know or are they willing to tell?**
ASK THE ORACLE ⁹⁸ .
- ☛ **Stuck for a detail or answer?** **Find Inspiration** ⁹² .

If this seems like a character who might return to the story, after the conversation ends record them as a Local Detail in this Volume.

Return to In a Volume⁶⁷

You can track NPCs you've met either as Local Details in a Volume, or (in Solo Play) as Story Cards, if you think it might be interesting for them to appear again later in your story.

SOLO PLAY

Downcrawl is surprisingly fun to play even without a group of fellow explorers handy. While most of the game remains the same, this chapter contains a few extra moves and rules for generating unexpected answers to questions and keeping track of your ongoing story, allowing you to tell an incredible solo story of subterranean exploration.

MATERIALS AND MOVES NEEDED

In addition to the **standard materials** 7, for Solo play you'll probably also want to have a notebook or text file handy to help track your character's journey through the Down and take additional notes.

Here is an index to all the Solo Moves, as well as moves from Impromptu play which might also be helpful:

- ✦ **ASK THE ORACLE** 98 for a yes or no answer
- ✦ **Find Inspiration** 92 for a more open-ended answer
- ✦ **Set the Scene (Solo)** 102 to get oriented in a new place
- ✦ **Focus** 103 to ground yourself back in the story world
- ✦ **Turn the Page** 104 after a big scene or chapter ends
- ✦ **Bookmark the Story** 104 when you're wrapping up a session
- ✦ **Resume the Story** 105 when you're starting back up
- ✦ **Greetings, Stranger** 94 when you meet a new character
- ✦ **Trading Questions** 108 to get to know an NPC better
- ✦ **Ask the Story Deck** 97 to reintroduce a surprising element to your story

THE STORY DECK

Core Downcrawl asks you to make a Map Deck tracking Volumes discovered, and a Folk Deck tracking peoples met. You'll do both in Solo Play, as well as creating a third deck: the **Story Deck**. This will help keep track of major plot threads, important NPCs, and other recurring elements in your subterranean saga.

During play, some cards from your Story Deck will be spread out in front of you. These are your **active Story Cards**, representing elements of the story currently in play. They're like visible scaffolding for the narrative you're making, helping you keep the building blocks straight and focus on what's most important right now. The face-down cards in your Story Deck are not active right now but might return to your story again someday, often when you least expect.

CREATING STORY CARDS

Whenever a new character, group, locale, question, or conflict comes up that seems likely to matter for more than one scene, create a Story Card for it. Grab a blank index card, write a name or short phrase at the top, and add it face-up to your active Story Cards. Leave room on each card to add notes as this element of the story develops and evolves.

When the story moves on, or at the end of a session when you **Bookmark the Story** ¹⁰⁴, you'll choose which active Story Cards to keep and which to return to your Story Deck.

Certain Solo Play moves will tell you to **Ask the Story Deck** ⁹⁷, which gives you an opportunity to introduce an element from your Deck back into your narrative.

***When in doubt, look to your active Story Cards:** they can help answer questions or resolve uncertainty. Could one of these elements provide a solution, a complication, or an explanation? Keep them front of mind as you play to keep your narrative focused.*

ASK THE STORY DECK

When you feel like pulling the story back towards familiar characters and themes, or a move so instructs:

- ☛ Draw three cards from the Story Deck.
- ☛ Consider which would be most compelling to bring back to your story at this particular moment. It doesn't have to be the literal item on the card: it could be an element connected to it, or even just conceptually inspired by it.
- ☛ Make your chosen card active by placing it in front of you. Put the others on the bottom of the Story Deck.
- ☛ Decide how this part of your tale makes itself known and continue play.

GUIDING YOURSELF

The heart of most solo roleplaying engines is some method of resolving questions in surprising ways. While a traditional engine helps answer questions like *Can I hit it with my axe?* or *Do I know that magic?*, there are other kinds of questions traditionally answered by a gamemaster rather than the rules, like *Are there any ground floor windows?* or *Who else is sitting at the bar?* or even *What does the elixir taste like?*

To answer these kinds of questions without a gamemaster, you might **ASK** any of *Downcrawl*'s tables or moves. For instance, to learn who's at the bar, you might play **Greetings, Stranger** ⁹⁴. Other kinds of questions might be answered with the help of an idea prompt: the **Find Inspiration** ⁹² move provides an index to the tables most useful for this.

However, you'll also have frequent questions with a **Yes** or **No** answer: questions like *Are there any ground floor windows?* or *Has the barmaid heard of Vorlax the Wise?* or *Does this town have a Magic Item Shoppe?* For these questions, you can **ASK THE ORACLE** ⁹⁸, a special table designed for Solo players. In addition to a **Yes** or **No** answer, the Oracle can provide some optional nuance, such as **No, But you find something else that's useful**, or **Yes, And someone is impressed**.

If you're using the Downcrawl Deck, you can use it to Ask the Oracle by drawing a card. If a **Yes** seems likely, draw two cards and

THE ORACLE

Have a clear yes/no question. If there's only 1 interesting answer, don't roll.

Ask and roll **2d6**, adding the numbers:

> If a **Yes** seems likely, roll **3d6** and keep the highest two.

> If a **No** seems likely, roll **3d6** and keep the lowest two.

If this was a question about whether someone can succeed in a high-stakes situation, you may choose to roll another **d6** and consult the *Flavor* column. Read from the perspective of whoever wanted a Yes.

TOTAL	ANSWER	FLAVOR
2 to 4	No	And... 1-the situation worsens, 2-lose something, 3-the physical or social situation shifts, 4-someone finds out, 5-can't try again, 6-a previously reliable skill or tool fails
5	No	Because... 1-missing right skill, info, or tool, 2-more difficult or unusual than expected, 3-someone's been deceived, 4-someone's unlucky, 5-someone's interfering, 6-a problem you thought resolved returns with a vengeance
6	No	But... 1-a threat or difficulty eases, 2-another approach presents itself, 3-something useful is learned, 4-true nature of the problem becomes clear, 5-an active plot thread proves unexpectedly helpful, 6-a deus ex machina arrives and solves this problem
7	YES, IF	You Pay the Price.... <i>Ask your guide for a devil's bargain, or roll:</i> 1-something precious is lost, 2-a new problem created, 3-a serious injury sustained, 4-too much of what was wanted, 5-only partial success, 6-someone unfortunate finds out
8	YES	But... 1-someone's urgently trying to stop you, 2-too much of what was wanted, 3-the problem is more complex than expected, 4-only get part of what was wanted, 5-an active plot thread is unexpectedly involved, 6-an even more urgent problem appears
9	YES	Because... Even: Someone did something particularly awesome: who, and what? Odd: Something unexpected or extraordinary happened: what?
10-12	YES	And... 1-the best possible result, 2-gain something extra, 3-someone is impressed, 4-an unrelated problem's also solved, 5-faster or easier than expected, 6-something useful is learned

keep the better answer. If a No seems likely, draw two and keep the worst.

Finally, **Ask the Story Deck** ⁹⁷ can be useful when you want to shake things up by reintroducing a surprise dormant element back into the story. If the action is starting to feel stale or you're running out of ideas, this can be a great way to juice your story back up.

Interpreting Oracle Results. An inspiration word gets you some of the way to an answer, but you'll have to use your creativity and imagination to fully answer your question. If you're trying to decide how the duchess reacts to your alarming proposal, and get the result *fire*, think about what's happened so far and the current situation. Is she fired up about your idea? Is she about to fire you on the spot? Does she literally toss your idea into the ballroom's fire? Let your mind wander and free-associate until an answer comes into focus.

Some solo players like to Ask the Oracle often while playing to provide a steady rhythm of surprises and unpredictability. Here's an example of a conversation heavily driven by this.

Gyro the clockwork giant has reached the distant tower of the Guild of Records with a very important question for them: the scene is set at a council meeting of the ancient archivists.

Gyro asks them the question he has come to ask. "Do any of you know of the land called Prospero?"

Ask the Oracle (seems unlikely):

No, but the true nature of the problem becomes clear:

The archivists hem and haw but eventually admit they haven't. But as they prevaricate, a more fundamental issue becomes clear. They cannot actually read the ancient records that they guard!

Gyro asks: so why do you guard them, then? So-Neen, the guild leader, answers immediately that they are Legacy, and Legacy must be preserved. (There's no need to Ask the Oracle if an answer immediately comes to your mind without it!) Gyro asks how they find anything at all in the records, in that case. The archivist says sniffily, "That is a problem for Librarians. We are Archivists. We merely preserve." Murmurs of agreement from around the table.

Gyro asks, in desperation, "Surely the records must be sorted somehow? There must be some system of taxonomy?"

Ask the Oracle: Yes, but too much of what was wanted

"Of course," So-Neen says. "They are carefully cataloged and labeled according to the System of Ludarvo." But this turns out to be so convoluted and involved it seems it would take a lifetime to learn it well enough to actually find something.

Gyro is despairing. "Alright, forget the records. I'm trying to find the Tomb of the Last Lord of Midnight, which is supposed to show the way to Prospero. Does that ring any bells?"

Ask the Oracle (seems unlikely):

No, and the physical or social situation shifts.

Another guild member demands, angrily: "And what precisely do you want with this tomb? Are you a grave robber?" Gyro denies it, but the archivists are muttering angrily. "Tomb raiders. We hold no truck with the likes of you."

Near tears, Gyro decides to spill his whole story. He was told the only way to find his unknown maker was hidden in this tomb. All he's ever wanted was to find out who made him, and for what purpose. He tries with every ounce of being in his clockwork body to convince the archivists to help him. Can he move them?

Ask the Oracle:

*Yes, because something unexpected happened
Find Inspiration (Quality): unseen*

A sudden chill washes through the room and spectral voice speaks. "You would do well to help this one in his quest, my living brothers," a long-dead archivist's voice intones...

STARTING A SOLO CAMPAIGN

Follow the instructions in **Session Zero** ¹⁴. Before beginning your solo adventure, there's one other step you'll want to take: seeding a third deck of index cards to go along with your Map and Folk Decks, the **The Story Deck** ⁹⁶.

START A STORY DECK

Pick three or more prompts from the list below and explore each on a new blank index card. You don't need to flesh these out any further than a name or a few words at this point, though you can if you'd like.

- ✦ *Something related to your Drive and starting question answers*
- ✦ *Unused idea from initial brainstorm*
- ✦ *Someone from your past*
- ✦ *Something you hope to find in your travels*
- ✦ *An old vow, almost forgotten*
- ✦ *A character flaw you've yet to master*
- ✦ *An old foe you thought vanquished*
- ✦ *A big question you have about the Down*
- ✦ *A legendary figure you hope to meet*

Put these cards face-down in front of you, along with your Map and Folk Decks. Now return to the Session Zero instructions to begin your adventure!

Organizing Your Decks. You might find it helpful to add the letters M, F, and S (for Map, Folk, and Story) to the back side of each card to keep track of which deck is which. Alternatively, it's fine to keep them face-up and simply turn them over and shuffle them before you draw from one.

SET THE SCENE (SOLO)

When you want more detail about the world around you, ask yourself:

☛ **What do I see here?**

(Or any other appropriate question, like *What's changed since I last visited?* or *What clues do I find at this crime scene?*)

Start to envision an answer to the question, coming up with a few words or a sentence that begins to paint a picture.

If playing with the Downcrawl Deck, draw one card. Any word on the card can be used to inspire a potential response. **Without the Deck**, you can **Find Inspiration** ⁹² if you like: roll and take any result in the row that catches your eye. In either case you're free to answer also from your own imagination.

You can now continue to Set the Scene with one of these key phrases:

☛ **That's Right, And...** Build on what you just said to add additional detail.

☛ **It's Even Stranger...** Add a weird or wonderful twist to what you just said. You might **Ask the Story Deck** ⁹⁷ if it feels like a good time for a plot twist.

☛ **I Also See...** Turn to a new facet, impression, or detail of this place, and begin to describe that.

Continue invoking key phrases and adding details until you're satisfied with the amount of detail you've created.

Return to Travel Encounter ⁴⁴ ; *In a Volume* ⁶⁷

FOCUS

When you feel too distanced or distracted from the story, set aside all the rules and mechanics and die rolls. Consider your active Story Cards, or the Local Details of your current Volume, and pick one to focus on.

- ✦ **Visualize this element** of the story in as much rich depth as you can. What does it look like, sound like, smell like, feel like?
- ✦ **Pick an action** that's happening here or that a character is doing. Why is this happening? Who is observing, or is the character alone? What is the mood?
- ✦ **Does this action lead back to your overall story?** If your character sees it, how do they react? Does it suggest a new challenge developing off-screen, or a detail your character might want to investigate?

Or **maybe it doesn't**, and that's fine too. Perhaps it begs further questions you want to keep exploring, or changes your understanding of a person or place. Let your imagination wander for a minute and trust what it tells you.

- ✦ Take as long as you like to explore, then **return to your character** and what they do next.
 - ◆ Think about next steps in any active **Ventures** ⁷⁵ or create a new one representing your most urgent problem. What's the first or next thing your character could do to address this?
 - ◆ Turn to **In a Volume** ⁶⁷ for possible actions; or if mid-journey, return to **A Day on the Road** ³⁸ or wherever else you left off.

If you invent any interesting new details, characters, or locations while playing Focus that you want to remember, jot a note down on an existing card, or create a new Story Card or Local Detail.

TURN THE PAGE

When you're wrapping up a chapter of Solo play, or any time your table is getting too cluttered, do the following:

- ☛ Consider whether there are any new characters, developments, or plot threads that should be captured as a Local Detail, as notes on an existing card, or as new Story Cards (if they're likely to reappear outside their home Volume).

Now, review each active Story Card.

- ☛ **Is it still an ongoing and active part of the story?** Keep it in your hand.
- ☛ **Is it gone or resolved for now but feels like it might come back?** Move it back to its original deck (Story, Folk, or Volume).
- ☛ **Is it resolved or no longer interesting?** Discard it.

BOOKMARK THE STORY

When you're ready to wrap up a session of Solo Play, take the following steps:

- ☛ **Write a “Next Time On” note** to remind you where the plot is going and what you're hoping to see come up the next time you play.
- ☛ **Star key scenes or moments** from your notes for this session that you want to be sure to remember.
- ☛ Play **Turn the Page** [104](#).

If you need to clean up your play space, you can consolidate your cards by putting your three face-down decks in a stack, then stacking your face-up active Story Cards on top. Stack the cards atop your map and notes.

RESUME THE STORY

When you come back to a Solo story after time away, do the following:

- ☛ **Find or make a quiet, cozy table space.** Consider making a cup of tea, playing some atmospheric music, or putting your phone in do not disturb mode.
- ☛ **Gather your supplies,** including the Downcrawl book and move reference sheets, a pencil, your notes, blank index cards, your Map, Folk, and Story Decks, and the Downcrawl Deck if you have it.
- ☛ **Arrange your active Story cards in front of you,** including your current Volume if any. Remember how each of these elements is relevant to the story you've been telling.
- ☛ **Recall your Drive and Ventures** currently active: your character's long and short-term goals, respectively.
- ☛ **Review your notes from last time,** including your "Next Time On" section and any stars you added.
- ☛ **Pick one active Story Card or Volume Detail** to **Focus** ¹⁰³ on; alternatively, you might **Ask the Story Deck** ⁹⁷ for a card. If it's a character (including yours), what are they doing as this episode begins? If it's a Folk or Volume, do we learn a new Detail or explore an existing one? Begin to ask questions, explore, and then ease your character and their narrative back into the flow of your story. If you don't have an immediate next step, turn to **In a Volume** ⁶⁷ or **A Day on the Road** ³⁸ when you're ready.

A good way to think of the "Focus" step in this move is like the cold open of a TV show. We're starting with some interesting image, detail, or moment, and giving it a minute to breathe before our title sequence and story proper kicks back into gear.

TIPS FOR SOLO PLAY

WORLDBUILDING

Solo Downcrawl assumes you will generate Volumes and Folk on the fly and discover new Details as you play, which is how related moves are written. If you prefer, however, you can create people and places in full before you encounter them, more akin to how a traditional GM would prep. Either method works just fine for Solo play.

If you do generate Volumes in advance, simply keep tally marks on the Volume's Map Deck card indicating how many Details your character has "learned" via moves that reveal a Detail. This is helpful for knowing when you no longer have an unfamiliarity penalty when you **Plan Your Journey** ³⁷.

VENTURES IN SOLO PLAY

Story Cards help track big picture plot threads, and you can **Find Inspiration** ⁹² or **ASK THE ORACLE** ⁹⁸ to help answer moment-to-moment questions. **Ventures** ⁷⁵ are a great tool for solo players to track what happens in the middle: problems or challenges requiring more than one roll to overcome.

VENTURES ARE STORY CARDS. You can keep unfinished or finished Ventures in front of you with your other active Story Cards. When you **Turn the Page** ¹⁰⁴ and clean up your Story Cards, treat them like any others when deciding whether they're worth keeping or not: an unfinished Venture might be something you mean to get back to some day, a finished one might represent a plot thread that could one day return.

COMPANIONS IN SOLO PLAY

It's only natural that your character might befriend (or begin with) traveling companions as they explore the Down. You're free to give each one their own character sheet and play them fully according to the rules of your base system, if you like.

However, this can introduce an overwhelming amount of bookkeeping for a solo player. An alternative is to *always roll as your primary character but assume your friends are helping you*. You can also think of this as "staying zoomed in" on your character: during combat, for instance, companions are participating but largely in the background. Grant yourself bonuses or adjust difficulty liberally for your own rolls, which will help make a solo journey through the Down more survivable.

SMASH CUT

This is a variant of **Focus** ¹⁰³ that's useful if you're feeling both distanced from the story but also weary about whatever it is you're in the middle of doing.

Just skip it. Jump forward to the middle of the next thing you're excited about exploring. Skip all the setup, planning, preludes, and plop your character down straight in the middle of the thing you were most looking forward to getting to. Cut to the chase.

Suddenly your character is in the middle of a new situation. Start to visualize and ask questions, as Focus advises: what is around you? What are you doing at this moment? Flesh out the details of the scene. Answer your questions with whatever feels right. More questions and eventually problems will arise, and before long you'll be back to compelling play.

This is a very cinematic technique, and good for countering the simulationist urge that you must roleplay through every moment in your character's life in sequence. That's not how most stories work, and it's not how yours has to, either.

TRADING QUESTIONS

This is a wonderful technique for getting to know an NPC better and fleshing out your relationship with them, and makes for a good slower-paced interlude between action- and plot-heavy scenes.

TRADING QUESTIONS

When you're not sure what to talk about with an NPC,

☞ **Ask them a question**, whatever you or your character are most curious to know about them. Ideally it's a big one, skipping conversational filler and niceties that might lead up to it: *how did you get that scar? what are you running from? what happened to the rest of your kind?*

✦ **If they seem unlikely to tell you**, maybe a skill check is required to convince them; or perhaps they just lie.

✦ **If you think they'd tell you**, explore the answer in your head: maybe you already know it, instinctively sense what it is, or maybe you want to **ASK INSPIRATION** 93 for help. Decide how the NPC answers and how your character reacts.

☞ **Now, let them ask a question in return.** Imagine what they might most want to know about your character. Think about the answer: invent it if you don't know it, and decide whether your character would reveal it (and how) once you do. You might need to deepen backstory or peel back another layer of your character's personality to find a truly honest answer.

Repeat if necessary.

Even one round of Trading Questions is surprisingly effective at developing NPCs and deepening relationships. In my own play, some of my favorite characters, and my PC's closest friends, arose through this process.

HITTING PAUSE OR UNDO

It can be hard to maintain the energy required for sustained Solo Play. If you're fifteen minutes into a session and just aren't feeling it, don't stress it. **Bookmark the Story** 104 and come back to your world another time.

Likewise, sometimes an idea that seems great in the moment turns into a dead end, or you lose enthusiasm for the direction the story has taken. Guess what: you have ultimate power over this universe, extending through all time and space. If you need to undo the last few bits of story to take things in a different direction, you totally can. Simply adjust any notes you made, rewind to whatever point you want, and start playing

again, doing something different this time around. First drafts are rarely the best.

SLIVER OF FATE

This is a lightweight roleplaying ruleset you can use as a core system for a *Downcrawl* game, if you don't have one handy. It's loosely inspired by *Fate* from Evil Hat Productions, but greatly simplified: among other things, it uses 2d6 instead of special dice.

Sliver of Fate is extremely basic, by design; if you enjoy crunchy rules and big skill lists, it probably won't be for you. But if you need a lightweight core system that will let you focus most of your time on roleplaying and on exploring *Downcrawl*'s unique rules and mechanics, it might be a good match.

For supplies, you'll need blank index cards to track characters and Ventures; writing implements; and four 6-sided dice. Optionally, you can use tokens (pennies or chips) to track Fate, and a handful of paperclips to track Marks and Setbacks.

The core of *Sliver of Fate* is three moves:

- ⌘ For simple problems that a single roll should resolve (like picking a lock, charming a guard, or dodging a boulder), play **Face a Challenge** ¹¹².
- ⌘ For more complex, opposed, or life-threatening challenges involving multiple rolls, you'll instead **Fight to Survive** ¹¹³.
- ⌘ **Catch Your Breath** ¹¹⁴ is also useful to recover afterwards.

CHARACTERS

An index card works well as a character sheet. Player characters have four **Approaches** to solving problems: *Forceful*, *Focused*, *Flashy*, and *Fast*. Write a (+) next to the Approach you're most skilled in, and a (-) next to the one you're least skilled in.

Devise three specific **Aspects** representing your character's unique skills, gear, style, or stunts. These might be things like *Expert Duelist*, *Silver Tongue*, or *Keeper of the Sacred Book*. As your character grows more powerful, they may gain additional Aspects.

Start with 0 **Fate**, which you'll gain when you fail rolls or use a broad range of Approaches, even your weak ones. Challenge moves will let you spend Fate to invoke Aspects, giving you a bonus to rolls. You can use tokens (like pennies) to track Fate.

MARKS AND SETBACKS

Whenever you use an Approach to **Face a Challenge** ¹¹², **Mark the Approach** in some way: you can put a dot by its name, a paperclip alongside it on your character sheet, or anything else that makes sense. **After a move ends when you've marked all four Approaches**, clear the marks to earn one Fate.

A **Setback** in an Approach prevents you from using it to Face a Challenge. You might earn Setbacks during challenge moves or as a consequence of injury. Indicate a Setback by converting the dot to a (!) or sliding the paperclip in to obscure the Approach name: a Setback overrides a mark. You clear Setbacks when you **Catch Your Breath** ¹¹⁴.

If all your Approaches have Setbacks, you're defeated, captured, knocked unconscious, or otherwise out of the action.

SCENE ASPECTS

When you **Fight to Survive** ¹¹³, you'll also create **Scene Aspects** representing particulars of your opponent or the environment that might be harmful or beneficial. For instance, an opponent might be *Vicious* or have *Petrifying Breath*, or could be *Wounded* or *Stunned*; you could also have the *High Ground* or be *Entangled in Vines*.

Negative Scene Aspects make challenge rolls tougher; positive Scene Aspects can be invoked by your allies to aid you. Scene Aspects only last until the end of a scene.

FACE A CHALLENGE

When you face a straightforward challenge, state your desired outcome clearly, then:

- ☛ **Pick a sensible Approach** and describe how you will solve the problem this way. By default this will be **Tricky**; a **(+)** Approach makes it **Easy**, and a **(-)** makes it **Difficult**. You cannot choose an Approach with a **Setback**.
- ☛ **Mark this Approach** if not already marked.
- ☛ **If this challenge is especially hard, or any Scene Aspects are present that can be used against you**, increase **Difficulty** one level only (even if both are true).

Now roll dice (or **ASK THE ORACLE** ⁹⁸ with the **Downcrawl Deck**):

DIFFICULTY	DICE	DOWNCRAWL DECK
EASY	3d6, drop lowest	draw 2, keep best
TRICKY	2d6	draw
DIFFICULT	3d6, drop highest	draw 2, keep worst
FOOLISH	4d6, drop 2 highest	draw 3, keep worst

- ☛ **On a 6- (No)**, choose one:
 - ◆ **If you conserve your strength**, you don't get your desired outcome but **earn 1 Fate**. Explain why you struggled or what you learn.
 - ◆ **If you push for success**, and can invoke a narratively relevant personal Aspect, **spend 1 Fate** for +2 to your result. **Allies can aid you** (also or instead) by spending their Fate to invoke narratively relevant beneficial Scene Aspects (+2). If your total increases to 7+, continue to the relevant option.
- ☛ **On a 7 (Yes If)**, ask your guide for a devil's bargain. **If you accept the price**, pay it and continue to **Yes**; otherwise take -1 and go back to **No**. If you can't think of a relevant devil's bargain, a default option is to take a **Setback** in the Approach you used.
- ☛ **On an 8+ (Yes)**, say how you succeed.

If you're using the Downcrawl Deck Oracle and did not spend Fate to modify your result, you can use the Oracle prompt text for additional context, complications, or inspiration.

FIGHT TO SURVIVE

When you face a dangerous opponent or life-threatening obstacle, create a **Venture** ⁷⁵ and one or more Scene Aspects representing dangerous abilities or environmental advantages:

- ☛ **For an average danger**, a 3-box Venture with 1 Aspect
- ☛ **For a serious danger**, a 5-box Venture with 2 Aspects
- ☛ **For an epic danger**, an 8-box Venture with 3 Aspects

To survive, you must **Face a Challenge** ¹¹² for each box of the Venture, with the final box representing the decisive moment.

For each box before the last, after you resolve the challenge:

- ☛ **If your final result is 6-**, your opponent counterattacks, you suffer injury, or your situation worsens. **Log failure x** in this Venture box, and either take a *Setback* in the *Approach* you used, or remove a beneficial Scene Aspect, and explain.
- ☛ **If your final result is 7+**, **log success** ✓ in this Venture box, and either remove a negative Scene Aspect or add a beneficial Scene Aspect, and explain. (Note that in **Face a Challenge**, allies can aid you by invoking beneficial Scene Aspects.)

If all your Approaches have Marks or Setbacks, clear all marks only and earn one Fate. **If all your Approaches have Setbacks**, you are knocked out of action until you have time to recover.

For the final box of the Venture, in addition to any other modifiers, take a +2 if there are more Successes than Failures, a -2 if more Failures than Successes, or neither if equally matched.

- ☛ **If your final result is 6-**, your opponent drives your party away, captures you, or prevails; or this obstacle defeats you.
- ☛ **If your final result is 7+**, you have defeated your opponent or survived this obstacle.

It's usually easiest to represent a group of enemies as a single Challenge Venture, although a pair of parallel Ventures might be appropriate for two very distinct enemies or obstacles.

In Solo play, ignore the restriction that beneficial Scene Aspects can only be invoked by allies; you can spend Fate to invoke these for yourself.

CATCH YOUR BREATH

Once per day when you have time to rest, convert one Setback to a regular mark. If all your Approaches now have marks, clear all marks and earn 1 Fate.

*During journeys, you may only Catch Your Breath by playing the Heal move during **Encamp**⁴². In a Volume, you may play this move in conjunction with **Recovery**⁶⁸.*

HOW THE ENGINE WORKS

When you **Fight to Survive** ¹¹³, you'll begin the challenge with all rolls one Difficulty higher than they'd normally be, because there will be at least one negative Scene Aspect that can be used against you. One strategy early on is to try to eliminate your opponent's Scene Aspects on a 7+ by addressing each of those obstacles or problems. Or, you can use 7+ results to create positive Scene Aspects, which will give your allies opportunity to spend Fate to aid you. You only earn Fate by failing or making difficult rolls, however, so it will be a balancing act each turn to decide when to marshal resources for future rolls or spend them now.

A key point is that the whole fight hinges on the final roll of the Venture. It's a good idea to have banked both some Fate and some positive Scene Aspects to invoke, to ensure the final roll goes your way.

As you take more Setbacks, the pace at which you can earn more Fate during Fight To Survive accelerates. It can be a strategic choice to let yourself get bruised and bloodied in order to bank enough Fate to turn things around in the final rolls. Marking Approaches you aren't very good at is also a gamble: you're more likely to fail, but if you've marked all Approaches you can clear the marks to earn Fate.

USING WITH DOWNCRAWL

- ⚡ Treat a *Bonus* as a +2, and a *Penalty* as a -2.
- ⚡ When you take *Damage*, take a Setback.

Eduardo, the skeleton bard, is unexpectedly facing a shambling creature made entirely of limbs that he caught picking pockets in the town square. It turns out it also has teeth, and now it is angry. You decide this is a serious challenge, so you create a new Venture (Defeat the Limb Thing) with 5 boxes. You need to come up with two Scene Aspects that benefit the creature. You decide it is Vicious, and for its second aspect say that the Crowded Street works more to its benefit than your own.

Eduardo's first instinct is to get to higher ground and get away from the teeth, perhaps by scrambling atop a market stall canopy. This seems like something that would need to happen Fast. Eduardo finds it Tricky to be Fast (his brittle bones are not his strong point). He might also try this in a Flashy manner, which Eduardo finds Easy. However, Fast is his only undotted Approach, so using it will earn him Fate. You agonize for a second, then decide to try for Fast, marking the Approach on your sheet. Both of the creature's Aspects are relevant here, so Tricky increases to Difficult.

You consult the "Face a Challenge" table to see that for Difficult, you must roll 3d6 and drop the highest. You get 6, 4, 1, for a total of just 5: a No! Eduardo currently has no Fate (he doesn't earn the point until the end of this move), so he must Conserve Strength. You decide the problem is that the limb thing (finger monster? hand beast?) is just too fast for Eduardo, and grabs him with a dozen grasping appendages, pulling him back down to the ground with a painful clatter. But the failure nets Eduardo 1 Fate.

You mark a Failure in the first Venture box, noting "Failed to clamber higher" beside it. There are no beneficial Scene Aspects yet, so Eduardo must "take a Setback in the Approach you used." You change the dot by "Fast" to a !, but are now able to earn a second Fate by clearing all the other dots.

By the time the final roll of the challenge rolls around, the situation has changed a little. Both sides have taken some injury: Eduardo now has a second Setback in Focused, but has set up a beneficial scene Aspect, Farewell To Arms (the creature is down a couple of limbs). Of the creature's negative Setbacks, "Crowded Street" has been eliminated (Eduardo cornered it in a back alley) but "Vicious" remains. Eduardo has gained and lost Fate but is currently back to 2.

It all comes down to this, so Eduardo uses Flashy, his best Approach. It would be Easy but for that pesky "Vicious" Aspect, which bumps it up to Tricky: a straight 2d6. Time for the dice! But oh no: the result is 1, 3 for a total of only 4. Looking at the previous Venture boxes, there are 2 successes and 2 failures, so no Bonus or Penalty is earned there. But that banked Fate saves the day: Eduardo spends 1 to invoke his Aspect "The Book of Dreams," casting a spell to hypnotize and confuse the creature; and spends the second point to invoke "Farewell to Arms," since the creature is losing blood and weak. This is enough to bump the roll to 8 and successfully complete the Venture. The creature will pick pockets in this Volume no more!

MOVE POINTERS

If you're ever floundering and not sure what move to play next, this flowchart should help get you back on track.

Are you on a journey? Spend **A Day on the Road** 38.

What to do in a Volume? See **In a Volume** 67.

✦ **Unsure what this place is like?** Play **Set the Scene** 91.

✦ **Need a new Story Hook?** Ask **What's the News?** 71.

✦ **Do you have an unresolved problem?**

✦ **If it's a Venture**, what's the next step toward solving it?

✦ **If not**, see **Ventures** 75.

✦ **ASK INSPIRATION** 93 if you need a twist or complication.

✦ **Don't have a current problem?**

✦ **Consider your character's Drive**. What's in the way of the next step toward achieving it? Does this suggest any **Ventures** 75 or a journey (**Plan Your Journey** 37)?

✦ **In Solo Play**, consider your active Story Cards, or **Ask the Story Deck** 97 for an unexpected new plot twist.

✦ **Want to get out of this place?** Better **Plan Your Journey** 37.

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If you have read or playtested *Downcrawl* and want to submit some feedback on this advance release, I'd love to hear it!

If you just have a quick comment, noticed a typo, etc., please email your comments to aareed@gmail.com.

If you want to submit a full playtest report, I invite you to use the following form:

<https://forms.gle/6yh64Dc9NdQkVvq48>

Thanks so much!

—Aaron

